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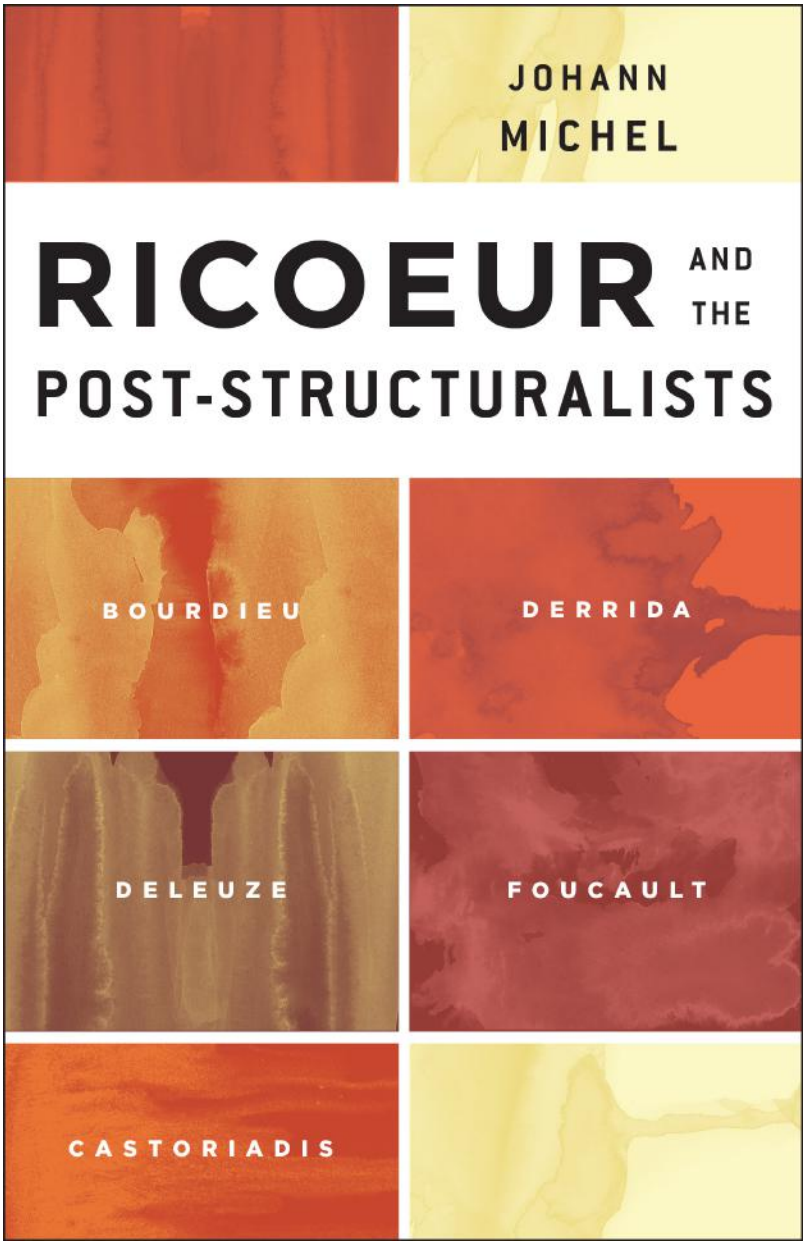
JOHANN
MICHEL
RICOEUR AND THE
POST-STRUCTURALISTS
BOURDIEU
DERRIDA
DELEUZE
FOUCAULT
CASTORIADIS

RICOEUR AND THE POST-STRUCTURALISTS

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Bourdieu, Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault, Castoriadis

Johann Michel

Translated by Scott Davidson

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

I have sought throughout to provide a translation that is faithful to the original French text and at the same time enjoyable for the English reader. I want to thank Johann Michel for his steady support throughout this process and Sarah Campbell for taking on this project.

Most quotations in this book follow the English translation of works cited in this book. In some cases, though, it was necessary to modify the translation in order to connect it properly to the argument of the book, without compromising the meaning of the original text. In those cases, I have indicated in the notes that the translation has been modified. When a work has not yet been translated into English, the translation is my own and the original French text is cited. Italics in the quotations belong to the work cited, and italics in the body of the text belong to the French original.

Full citations of works are included in the first reference to a work and then all subsequent citations appear in abbreviated form.

PREFACE

Publication of the translation of Johann Michel's *Ricoeur and the Post-Structuralists* is a most welcome event. Michel is one of the most talented Ricoeur scholars writing today, and the present translation significantly extends the growing international discussion of Ricoeur and augments Michel's own mounting international reputation. The book will be rewarding for those with knowledge already of Ricoeur, as it contextualizes and broadens the reach of Ricoeur's themes by demonstrating points of comparison and contrast with the contemporary thought of Bourdieu, Castoriadis, Deleuze, Derrida, and Foucault. Michel's treatment will also be enlightening for those more newly coming to Ricoeur in this volume through their prior study of the other figures Michel addresses. For a succinct text, the book is remarkable for the great range of Ricoeur's prolific corpus that it encompasses.

In deliberately setting out to write a fairly short book, Michel sets aside an encyclopedic treatment of Ricoeur and his contemporaries in order to focus upon—and achieve—great incisiveness. Ricoeur is well known for the "long detours" of his thought where he expends much effort and many pages gathering the evidence for his argument. Michel helps the reader concentrate on Ricoeur's main arguments. Similarly, Michel distils fundamental points of comparison between Ricoeur and his contemporaries. While Michel's own

perspective is sympathetic with Ricoeur's, throughout the presentations and evaluations are respectful, and Michel does not shy away either from critique of limitations in Ricoeur. In these ways, Michel's approach is an exemplary model of a critical hermeneutic.

Michel's analysis is framed by consideration of Ricoeur's location in relation to French post-structuralist thought. (The exception is Castoriadis, who is not a post-structuralist but examined for the role granted to social-historical creation.) Although the current academic literature would now more typically invoke the vocabulary of postmodernism rather than post-structuralism to characterize the trends in which this thought is located, Michel's retention of the term *post-structural* is very apt, as he wants to delineate his thinkers' response precisely to structuralism. While structuralism bracketed or eliminated the human subject as a source of meaning, post-structuralism reorients the issue and declares the subject not the master of meaning. On the one hand, Ricoeur shares with thinkers such as Bourdieu the structuring of the individual created by social institutions and personal dispositions (character, habitus). On the other hand, he also shares with Derrida and Deleuze the sensibility that the *cogito* is fractured and decentered, and that rupture with existing individual and social structuration is possible. He agrees with Foucault that the history of knowledge should be understood in light of discontinuity, and he and Castoriadis share that we never reach bare reality, as our understanding is always mediated by the social imaginary. Michel finds that Ricoeur's individual path exhibits a "unique variety" of post-structuralism.

The distinctive nature of Ricoeur's post-structuralism is particularly illuminated in Michel's acute development throughout the book of Ricoeur's theme of "objectification," a topic not sufficiently elaborated in the secondary literature. Drawing in significant part on the tradition of "reflexive" philosophy, Ricoeur's basic claim here is that meaning is understood not on the basis of intuition but in meaning's externalization in objects. This externalization applies not only to, say, the artist but to all forms of human activity, from discourse to action. Ricoeur insists that this externalization of human activity is inescapable. We are not the masters of this externalization, be-

cause the externalization may be a result of an unconscious or subconscious intention, the externalization—the creation—may differ from the inspiring intention, and the externalization may develop autonomy, for example, in the interpretation of a book or course of action. Ricoeur emphasizes against structuralism the creativity of the externalization, of the human structuring, and his post-structuralism is unusual in its endorsement that the structures created, including social and political structures, can be positive. While Ricoeur recognizes the frequency of externalizations that are reifications, where there is a sundering between an institution and its animating intentions, externalizations can also create positive objectifications, positive institutions. As Michel indicates, it is a hallmark of Ricoeur's later work that he moves beyond his earlier attention to care of the self to a systematic attention to what Ricoeur calls "the 'good life' with and for others, in just institutions." Michel's development of Ricoeur's thematic of "objectification" and his juxtaposition of this thematic to the work of the other figures discussed are two of the book's great contributions.

A third significant contribution lies in Michel's use of the objectification theme to deepen our appreciation of Ricoeur's well-known interrelation of understanding and explanation. Here also comparison with the other thinkers discussed is edifying. Understanding is typically viewed as the arena of the humanities, while explanation is considered the domain of the human and social sciences. Yet if human meaning is externalized into objectifications (here in the neutral sense of the term), this meaning can be elucidated by the human and social sciences—by such fields as psychology, sociology, political theory, and legal analysis. It is not only that, in Ricoeur's famous phrase, we must explain more in order to understand better, but that ineluctably the tools of explanation must be employed if we are to understand meaning in its also inextricable forms of objectification. Understanding is intertwined with explanation all the way down. As Michel articulates, Ricoeur's engagement with the human and social sciences resonates with the post-structuralism of Bourdieu and Foucault but distances him on this point

from Derrida and Heidegger, who contend that access directly to understanding is available.

If explanation informs understanding, so also does understanding inform explanation. In one sense, Ricoeur's philosophical analysis here develops an epistemology of the human and social sciences. Yet Ricoeur does not rest there. The goal of social scientific inquiry should not be knowledge for its own sake but knowledge that assists care of the self and of the other. Michel characterizes this knowledge as based ultimately on a kind of "spirituality," which should be understood not necessarily as religious but as a broadly human valuation. In Michel's view, Ricoeur has offered more than any other contemporary a "re-spiritualization" of the human and social sciences. As evident in the present work and in his own scholarship, Michel asserts through Ricoeur that the boundaries between philosophy and the social sciences are quite porous.

If understanding challenges the human and social sciences not to remain caught up in the structures of their forms of explanation, the final major contribution of Michel's book that I want to highlight broadens the point and also demonstrates some tensions in how Ricoeur's corpus regards this larger issue. Michel's insights here are particularly striking. Michel types Ricoeur's work principally during the 1960s as having a "Nietzschean mood." During this period, Ricoeur was addressing the "conflicts of interpretation" that required him to work through the hermeneutics of suspicion in order to develop his own more restorative hermeneutics. It is essential to appreciate that the hermeneutics of suspicion were not something that Ricoeur viewed to be in opposition to his own hermeneutics; rather, they were a necessary if insufficient element. Michel describes how for Ricoeur himself this suspicion arose in a condemnation—shared by Deleuze—of the dominance of the moral law. As Michel elucidates, the critique challenged the predominance of structures and forms—formalism and moralism—where form is all and human substance, values, and desires are lost. Importantly, the role of suspicion was not simply to destruct the idol of formalism but to open an alternative space for human vitality to flourish. Here, Michel emphasizes, Ricoeur was quite post-structuralist and very

close to the post-structuralism of Deleuze and Derrida in particular. Michel laments that this "Nietzschean mood" became eclipsed in Ricoeur's later work. While, as already noted, Michel lauds Ricoeur's turn in *Oneself as Another* to care for the other in just institutions, he is disappointed in that text's justification, even as a stage, of the Kantian moral law as necessary for the good life. If we may return to the vocabulary of objectification, formalism endorses "structures," which are reifications divorced from human value rather than positive objectifications of that value. Michel astutely illuminates, then, how resources are available in Ricoeur to challenge other points in his corpus where a more post-structuralist orientation is not overtly available.

If I have tried to address what are, in my view, the most significant contributions of Michel's book, I should also note that there are numerous other gems in the volume, which I can but briefly suggest. I was much taken by Michel's endorsement of Ricoeur as having a Spinozist worldview in his endorsement of the "conatus," the effort to exist. The chapter on Castoriadis brings out essential elements of Ricoeur's work on imagination and its social and political ramifications (concentrating on ideology and utopia), and the writings of Castoriadis on the social imaginary offer very revealing points of contrast. Ricoeur may more properly be deemed post-structuralist rather than postmodern to the extent that the latter wants to engage in a radical rupture with tradition; Ricoeur seeks to mediate between tradition, modernity, and post-modernity. In addition to the development of Ricoeur's interrelation with the major figures discussed in the book, Michel offers very discerning mini-studies of Ricoeur's interrelation with not only Nietzsche and Spinoza but also Freud, Gadamer, Heidegger, Levinas, Marx, and Weber.

Finally, let me express my appreciation of the translation by Scott Davidson, who is himself an esteemed Ricoeur scholar. The translation evidences the scholarly rapport Davidson established with Michel when they both served for several years as co-editors of the bilingual journal *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies*. We are the great beneficiaries of their work.

George H. Taylor

INTRODUCTION

It has almost become a truism today to think of Paul Ricoeur as a "philosopher of dialogue." For him, the need for dialogue is not merely a supplement to the soul but a hermeneutic principle. In contrast with the philosophy of the *tabula rasa*, thought can only progress by appropriating a sense that is already there. Reflection can only bear its fruits through a dialogue with the "great book of philosophy," even if this dialogue may occur in a confrontational way. Ricoeur turned this hermeneutic principle into an art of philosophizing and of writing. He never faced a problem without first referring to its interpretative tradition. That is not a sign of lazy thinking, which can only reflect through the thoughts of others. Nor is it a symptom of a thought that can only be assured by proceeding along with the greater thinkers. Nor is it merely the virtue of humility on the part of a thinker who knows that he has been preceded by others. To do philosophy by philosophizing with others is to position oneself first as a "disciple of meaning," before setting out for the future.

This hermeneutic principle does not claim that the philosophical tradition has already said everything and that we can now only be its interpreters or, worse, its acolytes. Ricoeurian hermeneutics never turns into the mere praise of tradition. Because it is concerned with the meaning of intellectual innovations, it is thus always directed

toward the birth of new philosophical or scientific paradigms. If it were just "antiquities," as Nietzsche says, and the history of philosophy, then Paul Ricoeur's work never would have bothered to confront the emerging views of his time—from phenomenology and existentialism to neuroscience and the "New History" movement. The disciple of a meaning that is already there is at the same time in search of new meanings.

Among these innovative paradigms, structuralism occupies a special place in Ricoeur's philosophical journey, especially from 1960 to 1970 when structural linguistics became the dominant leader of the human and social sciences in France. Initially trained in the school of phenomenology onto which he sought to "graft" the hermeneutical tradition, Ricoeur did not go so far as to reject the prerequisites and the results of this innovative "science" altogether. Nothing would be more mistaken than to see Ricoeur as one of the virulent critics of French structuralism. As with his relation to Freudian psychoanalysis, he turned his confrontation with structuralism into a challenge. It was a challenge to the extent that this paradigm presented itself as an anti-phenomenology: it bracketed, or even eradicated, sovereign consciousness as a giver of meaning. This is why structuralism can be represented as an inversion of phenomenology. It is no longer the case that the "world" is placed in brackets through the "reductions" carried out by a transcendental subject; instead, the transcendental subject itself is put out of play in order to pay attention to "systems of signs."

To be sure, Ricoeur was always very critical of structuralism as an all-encompassing and totalizing thought; he was always skeptical of the passage from a "structural science" to "a structuralist philosophy." There is a very Kantian epistemological gesture in a substantial portion of his work, as can already be found in his *Freud and Philosophy*.[1] It consists of showing the justification and the limits of any theory that claims to be scientific. It leads him to show, for example, that the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss is very well equipped to analyze the "totemic" areas of culture in "societies without history," but it is unable to account on its own for the configuration of "kerygmatic" societies, which are formed on the

basis of the interpretative tradition of the Judeo-Christian Bible. In the latter case, hermeneutics, as a technique for the interpretation of texts, makes up for the deficiencies of a structural anthropology in which synchrony prevails over diachrony and in which the event is neutralized by the system.

To denounce the excessive claims of structuralism, however, does not require him to distance himself from the valuable contributions of structural analyses, including their account of the synchronic dimension of social and textual systems in our own cultural areas. In spite of having their own epistemological domains, hermeneutics and structuralism are thus called to exchange their irreducible "perspectives" on the same object:

> There is no structural analysis without a hermeneutic comprehension of the transfer of sense (without "metaphor," without translation), without that indirect giving of meaning which found the semantic field, which in turn provides the ground upon which structural homologies can be discerned. . . . But, in turn, there is no hermeneutic comprehension without the relaying of an economy, an order, in which the symbolic is signified.[2]

There is no passageway leading from the Idealistic turn of Husserlian phenomenology to the prerequisites of structuralism, but Ricoeur's call for a hermeneutics grafted onto phenomenology opens up unforeseen opportunities for a rapprochement between the two traditions. This question does not only arise on the epistemological level but also directly affects the constitution of the subject. In Ricoeur's second hermeneutics, which centers on the text, structural analyses represent a crucial moment on the epistemological level in the dialectic of explanation and understanding: the text, as an internal configuration, is autonomous in relation to the author's intentions as well as the original context in which it was produced. Structural analyses provide a valuable method for explaining the internal structures of a text in a non-causal way. We can go so far as to say that, for Ricoeur, the "explanatory" moment is identical to structural explanation. Further, the incorporation of structural explanation in

Ricoeur's epistemological model also provides an opportunity to reject "psychologizing" and "Romantic" versions of hermeneutics that would say that the interpreter ought to be equal to the "genius" of the creator. As such, Ricoeur is not far from sharing with his structuralist contemporaries, like Barthes, the canonical principle that the "author is dead" when he says that "to read a book is to consider its author as already dead and the book as posthumous."[3] With the help of rigorous analyses developed by the most eminent structuralists and by making the author of a text "dead," the interpretation of texts clearly receives scientific cautiousness without, however, borrowing its fundamental principles from the "natural sciences." With the help of explanation, in its structural form, a fine dialectic supersedes the "disastrous" dichotomy of explanation and understanding that Ricoeur ascribes to Dilthey.[4]

Explanation of a structural kind is, however, only a "moment" that is necessary but insufficient, insofar as in principle hermeneutics does not allow the text to be situated outside of the world. The *raison d'etre* of structuralism—the constitution of an autonomous science of language, text, and action—is at the same time the source of its weakness: the loss of the referent and the world. Linguistic closure (signs referring to one another through the play of their differences) turns into an "ontological closure."[5]

It is then up to hermeneutics, in a post-Heideggerian move, to take over from structural analyses. Because a text is meant to be read and because a text is an invitation to reconfigure the world, the task of understanding and interpreting a text shifts from the author to the reader. Whereas structuralism is restricted to the relations of mutual dependence within a given system, hermeneutics opens onto the world and being. It is not the alleged intentions of the author that are to be interpreted but the multiple receptions in various contexts of a text that has been de-reified. As a quasi-thing, the text becomes a testing laboratory where the confrontation between the world of the text and the world of the reader is played out. We have thus justified a dialectic that can be translated into Ricoeur's adage: *to explain more is to understand better*. Through this dialectic, Ricoeur is fighting a battle on two fronts. On the one side, he is

opposed to psychological hermeneutics and rejects "the irrationalism of immediate understanding, conceived as an extension to the domain of texts of the empathy by which a subject puts himself in the place of a foreign consciousness in a situation of face-to-face intensity." On the other side, he criticizes the formalism of structuralism, which "gives rise to the positivist illusion of a textual objectivity closed in upon itself and wholly independent of the subjectivity of both author and reader."[6]

At the same time, the epistemological issue of the constitution of a "science of the text"—which, by means of a methodological transfer, also yields the offspring of a "science of action"—opens up a new expression of his philosophical anthropology. In place of the illusions or false pretenses of a transcendental apperception or an immediate understanding or knowledge of oneself, Ricoeur prefers to begin with the virtues of the long route of interpretation through the "mediations" in which human life is objectified in works, language, and institutions. It is precisely the task of structural analysis to objectify all of these mediations.

Ricoeur replaces the model of the immediate understanding of self with the model of explanation of the various objectifications of the self. But yet he is not wed to a positivism in the "human sciences" that would ignore the ultimate purpose of explanation: the *mediated* understanding of the self (the self including not only the "ego" but the whole set of pronominal variations: *I*, *you*, *he*/*she*, *we*, *you* [plural], and *they*). To explain *more* should thus lead us to understand *ourselves* better. This is the reason why the hermeneutics of the self, which best describes Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology, must help to remove the parentheses around the "subject" that strict adherence to structuralism would put out of play. The point is not to return slyly to the founding principle of the *subjectum*, but to develop a hermeneutics of a subject that is always in search of meaning, of others and the world. It is in this spirit that Ricoeur reconstructs a hermeneutics out of structuralist formalism. Although this comes with the risk of distorting the ambitions of its founders, it has the greater benefit of constituting a fully renewed hermeneutics. This follows clearly from his long explanation of

Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology, which, according to Ricoeur, cannot avoid the question of the meaning and fundamental issues of existence:

> In the background of the myth there is a question that is highly significant, a question about life and death: Are we born from one or from two? Even in its formalized version, is the same born from the same or from the other? This question expresses the anguish of origins: Whence comes man? Is he born from the earth or from his parents? There would be no contradiction, nor any attempt to resolve contradiction, if there were not significant questions, meaningful propositions about the origin and the end of man. It is this function of myth as a narrative or origins that structural analysis seeks to place in parentheses. But such analysis does not succeed in eluding this function: it merely postpones it. Myth is not a logical operator between any propositions whatsoever but involves propositions that point toward limit situations, toward the origin and the end, toward death, suffering, and sexuality.[7]

The preceding remarks lead us to believe that Ricoeur's relation to structuralism cannot be summed up in terms of the binary alternatives of either an uncritical acceptance or a systematic rejection. Ricoeur, to be sure, cannot be characterized as a structuralist thinker. His thought remains affiliated with the hermeneutic tradition. But—and this is one of the undeniably unique features of his philosophy within the field of contemporary hermeneutics—the structural paradigm is incorporated, not as a supplement to the soul, but as an epistemological and anthropological necessity in the process of a general theory of interpretation.[8] It would not be mistaken to characterize his hermeneutics as structural (but not structuralist in a broad sense), if it were simply a question of the status of the "human sciences," on the epistemological level, and of the status of the subject, on the anthropological level.

One could then go so far as to classify his hermeneutics as poststructuralist (or better post-structural) in the strict sense of the currents that pass through the variants of structuralism and mobilize

their resources in order to surpass its hyper-formalism and its axiom of internal closure. Yet, one might hesitate to use this expression to characterize Ricoeur's philosophical enterprise, because he never adopted it himself and because he rarely belongs among the thinkers that are typically classified in francophone literature under the general description of "post-structuralist." This reception contrasts with numerous North American studies that seek to open up a specific path for Ricoeur's post-structuralism.[9] Yet, this label is not at all self-evident, since there does not even exist a post-structuralist school or movement properly speaking, and since there are few thinkers who identify themselves as such. Such a description is presented, moreover, as a retrospective reconstruction. It is derived from the history of ideas, with the goal of identifying a generation of thinkers who have marked French intellectual history, chiefly from the remarkable events of the late 1960s up to the end of the 1980s.[10] These thinkers, who are usually philosophers or at least have philosophical training, have had a level of international recognition that has rarely been equaled by other contemporary French authors. Due to the conceptual equivocity of the generic label of "post-structuralism," the problem is that there is no true consensus about who should be included in this intellectual constellation. If the names of Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze, and sometimes Bourdieu, are frequently invoked to designate this movement, this is also due to the influence of the reception of these authors in North America under the label "French Theory."[11] These two generic labels, however vague they may be, do not completely overlap. There are some thinkers who are easily associated with French Theory, but who could only problematically be characterized as post-structuralists. For instance, Lacan and Barthes are included under the umbrella of French Theory, but they are generally classified as structuralists (though they, too, are sometimes considered post-structuralists).[12] None of this provides for a clear point of reference or identification. French Theory is a label (like the "postmodern" label sometimes connected to it that flourished after its popularization by Jean-François Lyotard)[13] that is more fluid and broad than "post-structuralism."[14] The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the

authors who are labeled as post-structuralists largely share the same critique of the modern subject as the one provided by the founders of French structuralism (Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Althusser, etc.). From this point of view, the border between these two currents is not entirely clear. Some of the authors classified as post-structuralist even make use of central concepts that are clearly anchored in structuralism (for example, Bourdieu's notion of *the field* or Derrida's concept of *différance*).

In all these scenarios, it is remarkable that Ricoeur is rarely mentioned under these generic labels (with the exception perhaps of the label of post-structuralism in Anglophone studies),[15] in spite of his long stay in America (notably at the University of Chicago), in spite of the dynamism of the North American Ricoeur community,[16] in spite of his critique of the foundational subject and his rereading of Freud and Marx,[17] and in spite of his passage through structuralism and his attempt to surpass it.

Perhaps the political conditions, in a "leftist vein," of the reception of Deleuze, Derrida, and Foucault in some American universities account for Ricoeur's exclusion from this group. If there is reluctance, as we have noted, to call Ricoeur's hermeneutics post-structuralist (or post-structural), it can still be worthwhile to juxtapose his work with that of a few thinkers who are associated with this movement. Such is the ambition of this work, although this attempt also has its limits.

First, I do not intend to provide an exhaustive treatment of all of the authors who are classified under the heading of post-structuralism (and even less so those associated with French Theory or the postmodern movement), whether they are French-speaking or not. The dialogue carried out here will be limited to Bourdieu, Derrida, Deleuze, and Foucault. It is noteworthy that I have also included the work of Castoriadis. Though he is not frequently associated with post-structuralism, his protean philosophy was deeply marked by Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Second, although I have specialized in Ricoeur's work since my doctoral research, I cannot claim to have the same expertise with respect to the work of Bourdieu, Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault, or

Castoriadis. While I have studied their work for many years, I do not seek to bring something new into the already massive secondary literature that has accumulated on their thought. My aim is to understand Ricoeur's thought better by reflecting on it through these other major figures of contemporary French philosophy.

Finally, it would be vain and beyond the scope of this work to try to carry out this dialogue on all facets of the respective works of these authors. This comparison will be limited essentially to the anthropological status of the subject as it correlates with questions of an ethico-political nature. It is around this set of problems that the post-structuralists have delivered their best intellectual weapons, and it is also around this same set of problems that a substantial part of Ricoeur's work has developed. This is the reason why they resonate with one another. Because the post-structuralist label has a share of conceptual equivocity, because it is less a rallying cry than a historical reconstruction, and because there are as many major differences between the thinkers labeled in this way as the commonalities that connect them, I have not opted for a systematic confrontation between "Ricoeur and post-structuralism." Instead, I have privileged dyadic confrontations that bring these pairs into tension with one another.

One might be surprised to find that Ricoeur discussed relatively little with his post-structuralist contemporaries. It would be mistaken, however, to claim that there was no dialogue at all between them. Here it is necessary to distinguish between the authentic exchanges, which were rare, except for the debate with Derrida on metaphor and forgiveness,[18] and the texts in which Ricoeur discusses some specific analysis of a post-structuralist, without there being any debate between the authors. Among this latter group, one must distinguish further between those authors who were the topics of substantial treatment (Foucault and Derrida), even though they are not central or recurrent figures in Ricoeur's thought, authors who are rarely cited (Bourdieu and Deleuze), and those who are practically never mentioned (Castoriadis). It is also surprising to note that when there was a discussion between them, it rarely concerned the question of the subject or of the ethico-political directly,

but rather the field of the theory of tropes (Derrida), literary theory (Deleuze),[19] or historical epistemology (Foucault[20] and Bourdieu[21]).

Hence, the risk of this work consists of staging a discussion between Ricoeur and some of his contemporaries where there was not one. This is a risk, in part, to the extent that it is not a question of restoring something that already took place but of constructing it out of pieces through the work of reading and interpretation. There is also a risk to the extent that there is a great temptation to assign the "good role" to our author. There is no "philosophy without a point of view," as Ricoeur himself emphasizes. My own philosophy derives directly from a tradition of critical hermeneutics that the author of *The Conflict of Interpretations* helped to forge. To the extent that my own "Ricoeurianism" has never been without some reservations, however, and to the extent that I have never hidden my sympathies with respect to so-called post-structuralist authors, I hope not to be unfair in my interpretations.

Although I seek to minimize the conflicts of interpretation between Ricoeur and his contemporaries, these conflicts will not necessarily appear where one might expect. Nothing would be a worse caricature than to contrast the antihumanism[22] of the so-called post-structuralists with the humanism that is supposed to guide Ricoeur's political and philosophical anthropology. Nothing would be more false and simplistic. Even though Ricoeur would refuse to characterize himself as an antihumanist, he does share up to a certain point the critique and deconstruction of the modern subject that can also be found in Foucault, Bourdieu, Deleuze, or Derrida. This whole interpretation will play out over the meaning of this "up to a certain point," which is what makes Ricoeur a "post-structuralist" (without fully being one) or at least a specific type of post-structuralist, as Lubomir Dolezel would suggest.[23] For these reasons, the topic of this investigation and interrogation concerns "Ricoeur and the post-structuralists" as well as "Ricoeur as a post-structuralist among post-structuralists."

NOTES

1. See Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970).

2. Paul Ricoeur, "Structure and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 60.

3. Paul Ricoeur, "What Is a Text?," in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 107.

4. The operation of grafting structural analyses onto hermeneutics does not, however, leave structuralism unscathed and would not satisfy its most illustrious representatives. As Betty Rojtman notes, it is only through some "mutilations" of structuralism that Ricoeur is able to incorporate the structural moment into the hermeneutic process: "Clearly, semiotics' exclusive consideration of the immanence of the text cannot be reduced to a problem of method. Behind this choice, there is an entire philosophy of the human and of representation, a whole ideological challenge that follows . . . the effect of the reflection of language, which Paul Ricoeur would like to limit strictly to the poetic field, thus remains for the 1960s generation a fundamental postulate which is characteristic of writing as such" ("À l'évidence, la considération exclusive de l'immanence du text, propre à la sémiotique, ne saurait se réduire à un problème de méthode. Derrière ce choix, c'est toute une philosophie de l'homme et de la représentation, toute une contestation idéologique, qui viennent se profiler . . . . L'effet de réflexion du langage, que Paul Ricoeur voudrait restreindre à un champ poétique étroit, reste ainsi pour la génération des années 1960 un postulat fondateur, caractéristique de l'écriture comme telle") (B. Rojtman, "Paul Ricoeur et les signes," *Cités* 33 [2008]: 69).

5. Jacques Dewitte, "Cloture des signes et vehemence du dire: À propos de la critique du structuralisme de Paul Ricoeur," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur* (Paris: Éditions de l'Herne, 2004), 99.

6. Ricoeur, "On Interpretation," in *From Text to Action*, 18.

7. Ricoeur, "What Is a Text?," in *From Text to Action*, 120–21.

8. Jean Grondin is the first, it seems, to have emphasized the singularity of what he calls Ricoeur's "positive hermeneutics." See his "L'herméneutique positive de Paul Ricoeur: Du Temps au récit," in *Temps*

et récit en débat, ed. C. Bouchindhomme and R. Rochlitz (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 121–38.

9. Among the first studies to clearly characterize Ricoeur's hermeneutics as post-structuralist, see Stephen H. Clark, *Paul Ricoeur* (London: Routledge, 1990), 5–7; G. B. Madison, "Ricoeur and the Hermeneutics of the Subject," in *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn (Chicago: Open Court, 1995). See also the important contribution by Mario Valdès, "Introduction: Paul Ricoeur's Post-Structuralist Hermeneutics," in *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination*, ed. Mario Valdès (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 21–30. It contrasts the semiological closure of structuralism with a semantics of hermeneutic discourse. For a close discussion of Valdès's thesis, see the article by Banzelão Julio Teixeira, "Situating Ricoeur within the Hermeneutic Tradition," *Divyadaan* 17, no. 3 (2006): 262–92, which reflects on the difficulty of classifying Ricoeur's hermeneutics together with his post-structuralist contemporaries.

10. There is no precise or true consensus definition of "post-structuralism" in the current Francophone literature. *The Gale Encyclopedia of US History* defines this movement in part as "a reaction to structuralism's claim to comprehensive and objective exploration of every cultural phenomenon. This countermovement denied the objectivity of linguistic and cultural codes, language, and categories of conceptualization. It emphasized the instability of meanings, categories, and the inability of any universal system of rules to explain reality." See http://www.gale.cengage.com/servlet/ItemDetailServlet?region=9&imprint=000&cf=e&titleCode&type=4&id=234117.

11. Johannes Angermüller, "Qu'est-ce que le poststructuralisme français? À propos de la notion de discours d'un pays à l'autre," *Langage et Société* 120, no. 2 (2007). This contribution focuses especially on the reappropriation of French post-structuralism by the German social sciences.

12. The article "Poststructuralism" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* includes Barthes and Lacan within the panorama of post-structuralists. Accessed June 17, 2011, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/472274/poststructuralism.

13. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). For a perspective on this movement ("a critique of a cri-

tique"), see Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), and Gilbert Hottois, *De la Renaissance à la Postmodernité: Une histoire de la philosophie moderne et contemporaine* (Bruxelles: De Boeck University, 2001). In this sense, the post-structuralist critique of the subject rejoins the postmodern critique of the rationalist and universalist Modernity inherited from the Enlightenment.

14. As François Cusset has shown in his *French Theory: Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze et Cie et le mutation de la vie intellectuelle aux États-Unis* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003), French Theory includes authors who share in common a critique of the subject through a rereading of the masters of suspicion (Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud).

15. Patricia L. Munhall classifies Ricoeur (with Derrida, Foucault, and Lacan) in the post-structuralist current. See her *Nursing Research: A Qualitative Perspective* (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Learning, 2007), 119–20. Kim Atkins's article on Ricoeur in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* also speaks about Ricoeur as "a post-structuralist hermeneutic philosopher who employs a model of textuality as the framework for his analysis of meaning, which extends across writing, speech, art and action." http://www.iep.utm.edu/ricoeur/.

16. In the course of his many years of teaching in the United States, Ricoeur instructed entire generations of students and disciples that can be seen today in the influential *Society for Ricoeur Studies* founded by George Taylor. The *Society for Ricoeur Studies* is the North American equivalent of the *Fonds Ricoeur* in Paris. The vitality of Ricoeur studies across the Atlantic (including Latin America, which has had a true effervescence of materials for a few years, especially in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile) gave rise to the creation of an international journal, *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies*, published by the University of Pittsburgh Library System.

17. This passage through the "masters of suspicion" leads Andy Lock and Tom Strong to characterize Ricoeur's hermeneutics as post-structuralist. See their *Social Constructionism: Sources and Stirrings in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 74–77. On Ricoeur's relation to the "masters of suspicion," see also Alison Scott-Bauman, *Ricoeur and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion* (London: Continuum, 2009).

18. See Derrida's response in "Le retrait de la métaphore," *Poésie* 7 (1978): 1–52, to Ricoeur's critiques in *The Rule of Metaphor*.

19. See Ricoeur's reappropriation of the problem developed in Deleuze's *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004) in the second volume of his *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

20. See the discussion of Foucault's *The Archeology of Knowledge* in the third volume of Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative*.

21. See the discussion of the concept of *habitus* in Elias and Bourdieu in Paul Ricoeur's *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

22. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *French Philosophy of the Sixties: An Essay on Anti-Humanism*, trans. Mary H. S. Cattani (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990).

23. Lubomir Dolezel, *Poetics Today* 21, no. 4 (2000): 633–52. Dolezel classifies Ricoeur's hermeneutics as one of the four branches of post-structuralism, along with deconstruction, empirical theories of literature, and pragmatic interactionism.

1

HABITUS, NARRATIVE, AND THE PROMISE

Paul Ricoeur and Pierre Bourdieu largely ignored one another throughout their university and research careers. With the exception of a short discussion of the concept of habitus in *Memory, History, Forgetting*, the two authors practically never cite one another. Although Ricoeur devoted a substantial portion of his work to questions of the epistemology of the historical and social science, and though he did confront some of the most important founders of the human sciences[1] (Weber, Schütz, Mauss, Lévi-Strauss, Halbwachs, Marx), he paid little attention to the sociological work of Pierre Bourdieu. And this is the case even though he did not hesitate to enter into dialogue with the French movement called "pragmatic" sociology (Boltanski and Thévenot), especially beginning with the 1990s. This mutual indifference can be explained in several ways.

First of all, Bourdieu's entrance into sociology, after philosophical training, involves a rupture along his itinerary with philosophical commentary and the history of philosophy taught at the university, in favor of joining scientific conceptualization with a hands-on approach. In contrast, Ricoeur is a historian of philosophy and always constructed his own work by drawing from the resources of the plurality of Western philosophical traditions.

Moreover, Bourdieu was trained in a philosophical lineage that was largely constructed against the tradition that nourished Ricoeur's philosophical itinerary: the history of the sciences (inherited from Canguilhem) and Bachelard's epistemology against the "psychologizing" tradition of hermeneutics; structuralism (in the lineage of Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, and Althusser) against existentialism (atheist or Christian); pragmatism (of the "later" Wittgenstein) against Husserlian phenomenology.[2] So, even beyond the conflict between philosophy and sociology that solidified with Durkheim's French school, there is a massive opposition between the philosophical currents that marked these two authors.

Finally, it is necessary to add two types of political engagement that conflict with one another, especially after the social movements of the fall of 1995. On the one hand, one can observe a radicalization of Bourdieu's antiliberal engagement, as he became one of the leading intellectual figures of the extreme-left and, at the same time, held in contempt by a part of the left that was in search of "modernization" and that sought to reconcile with the market and to get rid of Marxist idols. On the other hand, Ricoeur's "Rawlsian turn" oriented him toward a "second left," that of the social democrats, who were considered suspect by the other camp for having betrayed "the cause of the people" and for having abandoned "the left hand of the State."

In light of these differences, a comparison between Ricoeur and Bourdieu could quickly open up a systematic, point-by-point opposition between them. Without seeking to minimize the distance that separates these two thinkers on numerous subjects, it is still surprising to note that the antagonism is not always as great as one might imagine. Two recent contributions—one by Philippe Corcuff and the other by Gérôme Truc[3]—point in this direction by seeking to connect some aspects of personal identity in Ricoeur with some vital concepts in Bourdieu's work. Our initial hypothesis is that it is necessary to be situated on the terrain of structuralism and poststructuralism in order to understand the pertinence of such a rapprochement, without minimizing the irreducible gap that distances the two thinkers from each other.

HABITUS AND IDEM-IDENTITY

Paul Ricoeur's anthropology, as it appears in *Oneself as Another*, repeats a question that has animated modern philosophy through Descartes, Locke, and Hume: Are there some dispositions that allow an individual to remain identical over the course of time or is the "subject" never unified and thus only a discontinuous flux of perceptions and sensations? In response to this question, Ricoeur's approach can seem largely aporetical: the more one goes in search of a permanence or unity of the subject, the more it seems to flee.

Ricoeur introduces a first declension of personal identity—i*dem*-identity or sameness—which seems to respond directly to the challenge of the evanescence of the "subject." As its Latin etymology suggests, the term *idem* signifies that which does not change. *Idem*-identity as such concerns things in general, without any particular regard for human beings. So, when Ricoeur speaks of *permanence in time*, he is alluding, for instance, to the unchanging structure of a tool whose pieces have been gradually replaced or to the permanence of the human genetic code. It is precisely for the sake of better distinguishing persons from things, in his discussion with Peter Strawson, that Ricoeur introduces the notion of "character." It expresses the type of *idem*-identity that applies to individuals and collective entities.

Although it was initially developed in the first phase of his philosophy of the will, the notion of character no longer has the feature of immutability, as an "immutable and inherited nature," that Ricoeur ascribed to it back then.[4] Ricoeur assigns character a temporal openness, which clearly displays the process and constructive dimension of the distinctive traits that allow an individual human being to be identified and re-identified as the same. Defined as "the set of lasting dispositions through which a person is recognized,"[5] one's character does not always remain the same. This process keeps character from being turned into an identity in a substantialist sense and even paradoxically resists the pure and simple assimilation of character into *idem*-identity. The difficulty stems from the fact that if one's character has a history, if it is always already in the

process of being constructed, then it cannot purely and simply be identified with *sameness*. In other words, character cannot ensure the substantial identity of the individual. This is the entire meaning of the distinction between "immutable dispositions" and "lasting dispositions." The latter have a history, while the former are stripped of any historicity. This distinction can be understood best through a consideration of the two types of "lasting dispositions" that Ricoeur sets out to distinguish. First, there is the notion of a habit,

> with its twofold valence of being, as we say, formed and of habit already acquired. . . . Each habit formed in this way, acquired and become a lasting disposition, constitutes a *trait*—a character trait, a distinctive sign by which a person is recognized, reidentified as the same—character being nothing other than the set of these distinctive signs.[6]

Second, there is the notion of a disposition, defined as

> the set of *acquired identifications* by which the other enters into the composition of the same. To a large extent, in fact, the identity of a person or a community is made up of these identifications with values, norms, ideals, models, and heroes in which the person or the community recognizes itself. Recognizing oneself *in* contributes to recognizing oneself *by*.[7]

Regardless of whether one is speaking about habits or identifications-with, there are two dimensions of character traits that need to be considered: those that have already been acquired and those that are in the process of becoming acquired. Still, this leads to an aporia. By trying to give a history and a development to character, Ricoeur can no longer define it strictly through *idem*-identity. Only his earlier conceptualization of character—as it appears in the *Philosophy of the Will*—defined as an "inherited and immutable nature" can be assimilated with *idem*-identity. The only way to surmount this aporia and yet avoid the trap of substantialist identity is to grant a historical dimension to character and, at the same time,

show that dispositions are resistant to change, precisely because they are "lasting" and are incorporated in the depths of the self. To say that they resist change does not mean that they are outside of time. The price to pay for historicizing character, which is one of the tasks of *Oneself as Another*, is the loss of the substantial aspect of identity.

While Ricoeur's first conceptualization of character in the 1950s is distant from Bourdieu's sociology, his later conceptualization of it resonates strongly with the central concept of *habitus* that runs through the sociologist's work. At first sight, though, the notion of character would belong traditionally to the lexicon of psychology. It would be met with distrust by a sociology, inspired by Durkheim, that seeks to break epistemologically with analyses of individual lived experience. The very notion of identity, which belongs to the philosophical tradition, is quite foreign to Bourdieu's lexicon, unless it is simply used to denounce the illusions of those who believe that they have a singular identity. Expressions like "being oneself" or "constructing oneself" are associated with naïve notions of *doxa*, even when they are used in an existentialist way. Instead, one finds in Bourdieu's work the terminology of identifications as operators of classification, as ways of seeing individuals and dividing them up into social groups. Nonetheless, if one goes beyond these questions of terminology, one might be struck by the proximity that the philosopher and the sociologist display in defining their respective concepts: this conceptual proximity crystallizes around the language of *dispositions*.

The shared heritage of the concepts of *habitus* and character goes back to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as Ricoeur notes:

> Aristotle was the first to have tied character to habit by means of the quasi-homonymy between *éthos* (character) and *ethos* (habit, custom). From the term ethos he passes to *hexis*, an acquired disposition, which is the basic anthropological notion upon which his ethics is built.[8]

Bourdieu and Ricoeur are not content simply to repeat this Aristotelian concept. It is by means of a properly sociological investigation that Bourdieu renews the notion of *hexis* by defining habitus as a "system of lasting and transposable dispositions."[9] This is quite similar to Ricoeur's second conceptualization of character. Sometimes, the sociologist has recourse more willingly to the structuralist lexicon (which confirms the conceptual linkage between "structures" and "lasting dispositions"):

> The habitus is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes.[10]

Yet, structuralism is not the only background for the notion of *habitus*: this concept (like the related concept of *the field*) is inscribed in the framework of a "genetic structuralism" or a "structuralist constructivism."[11]

These expressions might seem paradoxical. Due to the primacy accorded to synchrony, structuralist orthodoxy does not allow for genetic or constructivist presuppositions (such presuppositions can refer to the genetic psychology of Piaget as well as the constructivist sociology inspired by Schütz). In that respect, the concepts of *habitus* and field (as a relational set of forces and meanings that define the relations between dispositions, positions, and the taking up of positions by individuals and classes in a given social world) are heterodox concepts and, as such, post-structuralist. Structuralism is involved here, though, to the extent that preexisting objective social structures predispose behaviors (structures that are objectified in the form of a field, "history made into an object") and the formation of identities (internalized structures in the form of *habitus*, "history made flesh"). Structuralism is also involved here to the extent that relations of meaning and force are defined relationally in a given field. The same goes for systems of identification within a given *habitus*. However, post-structuralism or hetero-structuralism is in-

volved when the concepts of field and habitus have a history whose genesis must be traced by sociology, in spite of the "objective" character of structures and the "lasting" character of internalized dispositions. The constructivist dimension of Bourdieu's structuralism aims precisely to conjure away structuralism's reification or substantialization of "structures" that turns them into ahistorical systems of relations. Bourdieu's hetero-structuralism thereby reintroduces a diachronic force within structures. Field and habitus are concepts that seek to account for both resistances to change and the potential for transformation and transposition (the transposition of schemas for seeing as well as dividing social worlds). The historicity of *habitus* is presented both as a point of view on the historical "origin" of dispositions and as a point of view on their continual process of adaptation and transformation in different contexts, however gradual it may be. It would thus be a mistake to consider *habitus* as a mechanical externalization (and as before) of the dispositions that are acquired over the course of the successive socializations of the individual. If that were the case, *habitus* would be a substantialist concept that runs into the same impasse as Ricoeur's first formulation of character.

It is more productive to join the second formulation of the concept of character in Ricoeur with the dynamic concept of *habitus* in Bourdieu, because the two authors were facing the same problem: to account for the force of dispositions without falling into the trap of substantialization, to temporalize what is the most resistant to change, and to historicize "structures" that seem to be atemporal "things." Faced with the same problem, the two authors can only find a tenable solution by situating themselves within a post-structuralist paradigm (one that is genetic and constructivist). It is not by chance that Ricoeur, in a rare reference to Bourdieu's work, provides a full justification of the concept of *habitus* in sociology, after discussing it initially with Norbert Elias in the epistemological context of the phases of explanation and understanding in history. It is fully justified when the notion of *habitus* provides an account of the structured and structuring within a "dialectic of the construction of the self and institutional constraints."[12]

The proximity between character and *habitus* appears even more clearly if one breaks down each of these concepts. On the side of *habitus*, one can follow Gérôme Truc, who insists on rereading Bourdieu's early writings on *Algeria 1960* and *The Bachelor's Ball*,

> in order to understand what specific meaning [the sociologist] gives to this translation, since he initially employs the terms *ethos*, *hexis*, and *habitus* with different meanings. To explain briefly, *hexis* refers specifically to the corporeal habitus of bodily dispositions, *ethos* is used in a Weberian way to characterize a set of spiritual and ethical dispositions, and *habitus* gradually emerges as the middle-term, the generating and overarching principle for the two other systems of dispositions—mental and physical—and ends up in his later writings becoming the flagship concept.[13]

On the side of character, what Ricoeur calls "habit" also refers explicitly to bodily dispositions, whereas what he calls "identifications-with" refer to a dimension that is more "spiritual and ethical," closer to *ethos* in Bourdieu's sense. The conceptual kinship of habit/bodily dispositions and identifications-with/*ethos* ultimately leads to a theory of identity in which the dispositional terminology of suffering, embodiment, and acquisition prevail. Character and *habitus* are composed essentially by the impersonal collectivity (values, norms, roles, etc.). This is why character, in a sense that will need to be clarified later, comes so little from oneself. Even though no one has lived through the same experiences, everyone's experiences are arranged in a singular way. It should be noted that the way in which Ricoeur defines character—"as the set of lasting dispositions *by which* one recognizes a person"—attests *prima facie* to a lack of reflexivity (the use of the impersonal pronoun "one" is symptomatic of this).

Yet, if one examines more closely how Ricoeur conceptualizes these identifications-with, some important considerations can provide an escape route from the register of dispositions. They make it apparent that within character itself there is already a relation that puts oneself at a distance from oneself. Whereas the broad definition

of character does not display any reflexivity toward oneself (and this is especially the case for habits), the conceptualization of identifications-with clearly does provide a distance from oneself that is marked by a reference to "recognizing oneself." This recognition no longer involves a process of re-identification of the structuring traits that operate from the exterior by an anonymous "one." Identifications-with do not have the passive characteristics of habits or of Bourdieu's *habitus* (in the sense of bodily mechanisms). Identifications-with are inseparable from a reflective turn toward oneself, which opens up a specific type of recognition—namely, the recognition of oneself. Ricoeur writes: "the identity of a person or a community is made up of these identifications with values, norms, ideals, models, and heroes in which the person or the community recognizes itself. Recognizing oneself *in* contributes to recognizing oneself *by*."[14] Moreover, the reflexive form of recognition implies an ethical mode of self-evaluation. It opens beyond the *ethos* and manifests a disjunction between character and another mode of identity that Ricoeur calls *ipse*-identity:

> The identification with heroic figures clearly displays this otherness assumed as one's own, but this is already latent in the identification with values which make us place a "cause" above our own survival.[15]

These references to reflexivity, self-recognition, and ethical judgment as putting an *ethos* at a distance are what separates Ricoeur's notion of character from Bourdieu's *habitus*. Character is a practical identity that is less passive and more reflective than Bourdieu's *habitus*. And this is the central reason why, in spite of their undeniable conceptual proximity, these two notions do not purely and simply overlap. Reflexivity, as a reflective and lucid return onto oneself, is certainly not absent from Bourdieu's sociology, but this work on the self is reserved to the work of the sociologist inasmuch as one practices the self-disclosure of one's individual *habitus* through a socio-analysis.[16] Bourdieu grants the sociologist (the "critical sociologist") something that he denies most "ordinary

agents" and other types of intellectual agents such as jurists or philosophers. They remain under the spell of illusion as long as they have not practiced the socio-analysis of their own *habitus*.

For Ricoeur, the importance granted to the ability to reflect does not signify a relation of immediate self-understanding. And the stakes of the "truth of the self" keep Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology from turning into the kind of subjective philosophy that would be denounced by Bourdieu. To be sure, Ricoeur does not at all deny the possibility of acquiring greater clarity about oneself, but this can only occur through a "long detour." In other words, the reflexive recovery of all of the lasting dispositions that are sedimented within oneself presupposes the mediation of processes of objectification and methods of explanation:

> It is the task of this hermeneutics to show that existence arrives at expression, at meaning, and at reflection only through the continual exegesis of all the significations that come to light in the world of culture. Existence becomes a self—human and adult—only by appropriating this meaning, which first resides "outside," in works, institutions, and cultural monuments in which the life of the spirit is objectified.[17]

This task leads philosophy to depend on the methods of objectification in the human and social sciences, at least when they are based on the structuralist supervision that comes from Saussure's linguistics. Inasmuch as structural analysis offers a method of objectifying systems of signs (linguistic, social, cultural), it can be incorporated into the process of the hermeneutics of the self. Under these terms, it is necessary *to explain more to understand better* (and to understand *oneself* better). What one cannot understand immediately about oneself, about all of the sedimentations of one's character, can be understand by passing through a phase of methodological distanciation that is practiced by the human and social sciences:

> The structural model, taken as a paradigm for explanation, may be extended beyond textual entities to all social phenomena because it is not limited in its application to linguistic signs but

> applies to all kinds of signs that are analogous to linguistic signs . . . We can say therefore that a structural model of explanation can be generalized as far as can all social phenomena that may be said to have a semiological character.[18]

This long detour through objectifications recalls the work of objectification that Bourdieu proposes precisely in the context of a socioanalysis. Ricoeur and Bourdieu reconnect here in an anti-Cartesian stance, around the same post-structuralist heritage. Here it is also necessary to add the emblematic figure of Spinoza. In a Spinozistic way, both the philosopher and the sociologist denounce the illusions of an immediate knowledge of oneself by oneself. They both call for a method of investigation that is able to bring out the causes, the lasting dispositions that root us less in Nature than in the world of culture. Let it be noted, however, that whereas Bourdieu sometimes tends to reduce this method of objectification to "critical sociology," Ricoeur extends it to all of the human sciences, provided that their explanatory basis resides in structural analysis.

NARRATIVE IDENTITY AND BIOGRAPHICAL ILLUSION

This reading of Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology does not yet remove the recurrent problem posed by permanence in time. On the one hand, Ricoeur places his hopes in the "invariance" of character as a set of "lasting dispositions." On the other hand, he denies the "immutable status" of character, due to its temporal dimension. Faced with this aporia of a "temporal invariance," Ricoeur ultimately looks to the narrative component of personal identity in order to ensure a concordance with oneself through a narrativization of character. The emplotment of the self becomes the privileged means by which the dispositional transformations of character become intelligible and concordant:

> It is then comprehensible that the stable pole of character can contain a narrative dimension, as we see in the uses of the term "character" identifying it with the protagonist in a story. What sedimentation has contracted, narration can redeploy.[19]

The ability to narrate the heterogeneous elements of one's existence and to emplot the habits and the identifications-with that are sedimented in the depths of the self calls upon another aspect of personal identity: narrative identity. Narrative identity is another reflexive modality of the self. Its way of taking a distance from oneself is different from passing through the long detour of objectifications. It enables one to be extracted from the reifying framework of character by restoring its retrospective movement and its fundamental historicity. Character is structuring and structured, but narrative identity gives it an internal dynamic. The narrative dimension of personal identity keeps it from turning into a substantialist identity, akin to all mistaken identities:

> The fact that character must be set back within the movement of narration is attested to by numerous vain debates on identity, in particular when they concern the identity of a historical community. When Fernand Braudel treats *L'Identité de la France*, he attempts, of course, to point out lasting, even permanent, distinctive traits by which we recognize France as a quasi-character. But separated from history and geography, something the great historian is careful not to do, these traits are solidified and lend themselves to exploitation by the most harmful ideologies of "national identity."[20]

Narrative identity reveals a modality of the "who" of personal identity, by activating a purely personal reappropriation of the history of the subject. In this sense, the introduction of narrative identity marks a distance from a rigid conception of habitus. As Gérôme Truc rightly notes:

> Narrative allows for a dynamic identity and accounts for the subjective stabilizations of the process of sedimentation that pro-

> duces character. Or, in other words, it explains how ipseity can lead to a change of sameness, how a habitus can be changed in an endogenous way.[21]

Several different readings of this new mode of personal identity are possible. Narrative identity can be defined in a restrictive way. This is what results in particular from the "Sixth Study" of *Oneself as Another*, where narrative identity is constructed through a two-fold "transfer." On the one hand, the emplotment of the narrative—taken from the Aristotelian *muthos*—is transferred to the characters in the narrative; on the other hand, the emplotment of characters in narratives is transferred to individuals themselves through the act of reading. Ricoeur calls this latter operation "reconfiguration" (which is closely related to the concept of application in Gadamer's hermeneutics). By exploring historical and fictional narratives, the reader experiments with plots that provide a possible basis for narrating and making intelligible the experiences of his or her own life. The reconfiguration of fictional or historical plots produces a narrative distance from all of the lasting dispositions: "In this sense, literature proves to consist in a vast laboratory for thought experiments in which the resources of variation encompassed by narrative identity are put to the test of narration."[22] The restrictions weighing on the extension of narrative identity to every narrative about oneself are tied to the choice of the model of narrative configuration. This model implicitly excludes the fictional narratives that mark more of a rupture—or a schism—with the paradigm of emplotment inherited from Aristotle. If some narratives in contemporary literature, like the New Novel, turn more toward dissonance, the formless, and the chaotic, if the characters of the narrative are at the limits of non-existence, this means concretely that the reader him or herself loses all identity through this transfer. How can time be narrated if it is achronic, if events can never be brought into an intelligible order, if sense becomes mired in non-sense? Actually, the work of reconfiguration can have its expected effects on personal identity only if the reader privileges a narrative that prioritizes the principle of narrative concordance and the identification of characters.

Yet, a much more extensive reading or appropriation of narrative identity can be made, if one lifts the restrictions placed on the above account and thereby recognizes a narrative competence within all individuals to establish a narrative distance from themselves. Along with the phenomenologist David Carr,[23] one could then use the term *narrativity* to describe this fundamental (ontological) level of narrative self-construction, without assuming the terminology that is associated with plots. In other words, narrative identity in its restrictive sense is only one particular expression of a more fundamental narrativity that can be defined simply in terms of the ability of an individual or a collectivity to narrate themselves. Whence the importance for the social sciences to have recourse to a narration of the self that is irreducible to the model of emplotment inherited from Aristotle.[24]

A third reading of the concept of narrative identity can be provided by inscribing it within the problem of the "truth of the self." Does the reflexivity immanent to the emplotment of one's life history provide better knowledge of oneself, or is it ultimately only one more illusion of the subject about itself? Does narrative identity reestablish the foundational position of the reflective subject? It is undeniable that, for Ricoeur, narrative identity is a singular mode of understanding and interpreting the self. Yet, the philosopher does not have a naïve or enchanted view of this mode of personal identity. Narrative identity, first of all, does not establish a permanent and fixed configuration of the self. From the third volume of *Time and Narrative* onward, Ricoeur places an emphasis on the instability and the fragility of narrative identity:

> Just as it is possible to compose several plots on the subject of the same incidents (which, thus, should not really be called the same events), so it is always possible to weave different, even opposed, plots about our lives. . . . In this sense, narrative identity continues to make and unmake itself.[25]

In addition, the emplotment of one's life does not at all amount to granting the individual a sovereign power over itself. The life

histories of each person are interwoven with the histories of others (what I thus put into a narrative is also a system of relations with the others that have marked my life). Besides, the extremes of my life (birth and death) belong more to the story of others than to myself. In this sense, Ricoeur always recalls that if I can become the narrator of my existence through emplotment, I am still not the author of it "but at most, to use Aristotle's expression, the coauthor, the *sunaithon*."[26] It would thus be a grave mistake to imagine that Ricouer's conception of narrative identity would secretly restore the foundational role of the subject.

Can one say that narrative identity stems from a "biographical illusion"? When Bourdieu addresses this illusion, it is not directly Ricoeur's concept that is intended. Instead, it is the "staggering" return of new qualitative methods derived from the Chicago School, which were eclipsed after World War II due to the predominance of quantitative methods. But in this quarrel over method, it is indeed the problem of the subject and of identity that is at stake. Bourdieu identifies three principal illusions that lend credence to life stories. First of all, the sociologist reveals an individualistic illusion, according to which there would be unique or "individual stories." Such illusions cover over the essentially social dispositions that produce the self. Second, he identifies a teleological illusion in virtue of which

> "Life" constitutes a totality, a coherent and directed whole, which can and must be understood as the unified expression of a subjective and objective "intention," a project. . . . This life is organized as a story (in the sense of a narrative) and unfolds according to a chronological order that is also a logical order that follows a beginning, an origin, in the dual sense of a point of departure, a start, but also of a principle, a reason, a first cause, and proceeds to its end which is also a goal, a completion. . . . The subject and object of biography (the seeker and the sought) have the same interest in accepting *the postulate of the meaning of the life recounted* (and implicitly of all life).[27]

Finally, through this "artificial creation of sense," Bourdieu unmasks the subjectivist illusion of a mastery of the sense of the life of a narrative subject who believes that he or she can recover a position of sovereignty.

Does this critique of the biographical illusion undermine the Ricoeurian concept of narrative identity? Not if one considers Ricoeur's explicit precautions. First, the individualistic illusion does not discredit the conception of a narrative identity that emplots the lasting dispositions, which refer more to the anonymous than to the individual. Second, the teleological illusion does not damage the formulation of a "fragile and unstable" narrative identity, which continually is made and unmade, without an *a priori* purpose. Finally, the subjectivist illusion does not affect a narrative identity that is based on an anti-Cartesian hermeneutic foundation. From this point of view, Gérôme Truc is right to note that Bourdieu and Ricoeur share the same anti-subjectivist presupposition:

> [T]he one who acts is in no way the author of his or her action. . . . This is perfectly clear in Pierre Bourdieu's work, which is based first and foremost on the distinction between the practical sense, of the agent involved in an action, and the theoretical sense, taken from the author's point of view. The term "agent" is more suited to Bourdieu than the term "actor" because the agent is acted on as much as, if not more, acting. In a sense, what acts in the agent is habitus, and through the habitus, an entire incorporated social structure is expressed and revealed as an author.[28]

In his discussion of Alasdair MacIntyre in the "Sixth Study" of *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur offers a critique of MacIntyre's narrative conception that might be seen in terms of the biographical illusion. In this way at least, there would be no room for a contrast between Ricoeur's formulation of narrative identity and Bourdieu's strategy of unmasking biographical illusions. Moreover, the strategy of suspicion is far from being absent from Ricoeur's anthropology. In the preface to *Oneself as Another*, the philosopher clearly shows that he has not broken from a hermeneutics of suspicion standing in

the lineage of Nietzsche and Marx. The insistence on capabilities—the subject's ability to speak, to act, to narrate, and to impute an action—always finds a counterpart in an attitude of suspicion about the reality (or sincerity) of these capabilities. The justification of this hermeneutics of suspicion is related, from this point of view, to a sociology of unmasking in the post-Marxist lineage professed by Bourdieu.

The rapprochement ends there, however. There are two fundamental principles in Ricoeur's hermeneutics that separate it from the sociology of unmasking. First, the strategy of suspicion toward the abilities of the subject finds its counterpart in what Ricoeur calls attestation. While the sociology of Bourdieu and his followers remains within the strict line of the distinction between truth and illusion, Ricoeur introduces a pair of distinctions that are more hermeneutic than epistemological:

> What is set in opposition to attestation is fundamentally the notion of *episteme*, of science, taken in the sense of ultimate and self-founding knowledge. And in this opposition attestation appears to be less demanding than the certainty belonging to the ultimate foundation. Attestation presents itself first, in fact, as a kind of belief. But it is not a doxic belief in the sense in which *doxa* (belief) has less standing than *episteme* (science, or better, knowledge). Whereas doxic belief is implied in the grammar of "I believe that," attestation belongs to the grammar of "I believe-in." It thus links up with testimony, as the etymology reminds us, inasmuch as it is in the speech of the one giving testimony that one believes. One can call upon no epistemic instance greater than that of the belief—or if one prefers, the credence—that belongs to the triple dialectic of reflection and analysis, of self-hood and sameness, and of self and other.[29]

The only possible attitude for the sociologist who is critical of society is one of suspicion with regard to the sense that agents assign to themselves and their actions. They are all entangled in a doxic belief—an "I believe that"—inasmuch as they have not practiced a true socio-genesis, which is equivalent to an *episteme* for

Ricoeur. For the critical sociologist, all belief is doxic by nature. That is not the attitude of the hermeneut. Although the attitude of suspicion with respect to one's own capacities and those of others does belong to this approach, its corollary is a posture of attestation, that is to say, of confidence in the power to speak, to act, or to narrate. For the hermeneut, belief cannot be reduced to a *doxa*. That is indeed the reason why narrative identity cannot be reduced to a biographical illusion. At the same time, the central category of attestation leads us closer to a "a critical sociology of society" in Luc Boltanski's sense. It involves both explaining and attesting to "what people are capable of." They are not only capable of critiquing society, of arriving at public denunciations (including the use of sociological categories that have entered into common sense), but also of emplotting themselves and of breaking free from power relations. This is particularly true when individuals are placed in situations in need of justification:

> The work of the sociologist seeks to reconstitute the competence that actors must be able to enact in order to produce arguments that are acceptable—"convincing"—to others in specific situations: in other words, arguments that can support a claim to intelligibility and thus have a high degree of objectivity.[30]

Ricoeur's hermeneutic position breaks even more radically from the principles of critical sociology in virtue of the place of the sociologist in relation to social agents. Since social agents do not know the hidden meaning of their own actions or identity, it is up to the critical sociologist to reveal this hidden meaning—that is, the *habitus* of individuals—from an external position (at least when one is in one's "laboratory," to speak like Boltanski). Ricoeur, in the name of the finitude of our understanding, never failed to challenge excessive stances like these. They are reminiscent of the Platonic attitude that turns the philosopher into the guardian of *episteme*, who looks from on high at those who remain rooted in *doxa*, even when one wants to release them from their chains by leading them through the shadows of *doxa* to the light of *episteme*. To be sure,

Ricoeur's hermeneutics is not the perspectivism of Nietzsche or the relativism of Latour. It does not seek to blur the lines between ordinary knowledge and expert knowledge, but the author of *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* does not hesitate to struggle against the efforts of positivism and scientism, in company with Habermas, and to unmask the ideologies, illusions, or interests at work in every scientific enterprise.

THE PROMISE AND ITS DILEMMAS

Another declension of personal identity still remains to be examined. This mode of identity offers another way of responding to the problem of the permanence of the self over time. When personal identity tends to be merged with character, the response to the question "Who am I?" almost overlaps with the answer to the question "What am I?" In other words, the identity of an individual is reduced to the set of lasting dispositions that allow one to be reidentified as the same. According to Bourdieu, the only way to answer empiricist doubts about the permanence of the self beyond the diversity of sensations and perceptions is on the sociological level. Put otherwise, Bourdieu has the *habitus* play the role of Kant's "transcendental I," that is, to ensure the unity of the subject over time:

> One can surely find an active principle in the habitus, irreducible to passive perceptions, that unifies practices and representations (that is to say the equivalent, historically established and thus historically situated) of the ego whose existence must be posited, according to Kant, in order to account for the synthesis of a given sensible manifold in intuition and the connection of representations in consciousness.[31]

As iconoclastic as it may be (to have "empirical" dispositions play the Kantian role of the "transcendental" ego), does this solution not run the risk, as Bourdieu himself notes, of substantializing and

de-historicizing identity? The originality of Ricoeur's approach, in answering the same challenge, consists of opening up modalities of the permanence of the self that are irreducible to these lasting dispositions. Such modalities reveal a disjunction between the "who" and the "what" of personal identity, when *ipse-identity* ceases to coincide with *idem-identity*. While a sociologist like Bourdieu tends to reduce personal identity to the *habitus*—to the *what* of personal identity—Ricoeur takes other ways of being a self into consideration.

Among the ethical relations to oneself, the promise—or, more precisely, the keeping of promises—is of particular interest to Ricoeur because it touches directly on the problem of the permanence of the self over time. Ricoeur does not consider the speech act of promising as merely one performative (in Austin's sense) among others. In effect, when one's word is given and kept, such an action implies a new relationship not only to the other but also to oneself: self-constancy (*le maintien de soi*). Ricoeur is quite aware that the promise does not exhaust the other existential modalities of "self-constancy." He knows this as much as he knows he is borrowing this concept from Heidegger. But rather than "filling" the content of self-constancy in a Heideggerian way with "an anticipatory resoluteness toward death," Ricoeur relies on an ethical resolution that engages the subject for the other. The decision to privilege the promise over another modality of self-constancy derives from an ethical choice by Ricoeur. This ethical choice provides a unique pledge of the permanence of the self over time:

> Keeping one's word expresses a self-constancy which cannot be inscribed, as character was, within the dimension of something in general but solely within the dimension of "who?" Here, too, common usage is a good guide. The perseverance of character is one thing, the constancy of friendship is quite another . . . keeping one's promise . . . does indeed appear to stand as a challenge to time, a denial of change: even if my desire were to change, even if I were to change my opinion or my inclination, "I will hold firm."[32]

By insisting on the contrast between self-constancy and the perseverance of character with the aim of better determining the ethical dimension of ipseity, Ricoeur does not want to risk entirely split up personal identity, however. That is why he grants narrative identity a mediating role between the two opposite poles of personal identity:

> In narrativizing character, the narrative returns to it the movement abolished in acquired dispositions, in the sediment of identifications-with. In narrativizing the aim of the true life, narrative identity gives it the recognizable features of characters loved or respected. Narrative identity makes the two ends of the chain link up with one another: the permanence in time of character and that of self-constancy.[33]

Ricoeur does not hesitate to recognize that this mediation itself is fragile, not only due to the instability of narrative identity but also due to the modes of organization and connection of character and the promise. In one case, as we have seen, ipse-identity tends to merge with *habitus*, without ever coinciding with it. In the absence of self-constancy through a kept promise, one owes most of one's permanence over time to the lasting dispositions of one's *ethos* and one's *hexis*. It is in this respect that *habitus* takes the place of the transcendental function of the "I think," according to a path sketched out by Bourdieu himself. In a second case, the ipse-identity unfolds without any connection to character. The ethical relation to oneself and the other emancipates oneself from any rootedness in "lasting dispositions." This ethical relation defines a limit-experience, when the subject is confronted with its own nothingness, an experience through which one can no longer recognize oneself in the acquired dispositions that are believed to constitute oneself. Does such a crisis of identification necessarily lead to a complete loss of identity? Not if the promise is placed above this annihilation of oneself. This limit experience opens up an ethics inspired by Levinas that can go all the way to the substitution of the self for the other:

> "Here I am!" by which the person recognizes himself or herself as the subject of imputation marks a halt in the wandering that may well result from the self's confrontation with a multitude of models for action and life, some of which go so far as to paralyze the capacity for firm action. Between the imagination that says, "I can try anything" and the voice that says, "Everything is possible but not everything is beneficial (understanding here, to others and to yourself)," a muted discord is sounded. It is this discord that the act of promising transforms into a fragile concord: "I can try anything," to be sure, but "Here is where I stand!"[34]

What happens, however, when the promises that the subject tries to keep enter into conflict with one another? How can one maintain oneself in time, if the other can no longer count on the author of the promise? This conflict is brought to light quite well by the Dardenne brothers' film *The Promise* (1996). This connection can be ventured—between film analysis and philosophical concepts—because Ricoeur's theory of reconfiguration invites us to show how works of fiction constitute "laboratories" for testing the imaginative variations of the possibilities of life. And, moreover, Marlène Zarader has already devoted some superb pages testing the Ricoeurian paradigm of the promise through a subtle analysis of this film by the Dardenne brothers.[35]

The plot of the film, to briefly summarize, is not based on one promise but on two ways of promising, on two types of loyalty. Igor, a young adolescent, works part-time for his father (Roger), in a construction business that exploits undocumented workers. After a serious fall, one of the undocumented workers, from Burkina Faso, is just about to die and asks Igor to promise him to take care of his wife (and infant) who also works in the "business." Igor gives his word. But the keeping of this promise clashes with his father's decision to get rid of this woman (by selling her to pimps)—since she is a troubling witness for the maintenance of his "business."

The whole plot is based on the adolescent's agonizing choice between two poles of self-constancy. The identity of the character is split between two types of promises or loyalties. The first derives

from a properly ethical modality of the promise, in the sense defined by Ricoeur. "In the wanderings of his life," Igor answers by a "Here I am" and "Here I stand," which gives a new impulse to his life. As a new beginning, the kept word becomes the new hinge of his life and of his ipse-identity. The second loyalty is derived from a specific category that ultimately refers to identifications-with. It concerns a strongly internalized disposition from early childhood—namely, the loyalty, respect, and debt that the child feels toward his parents. Whereas the first category of the promise is active, and results from a decision, a choice, and a firm commitment, the second proceeds from a social disposition to fidelity, from an implicit promise that enters into the framework of an *ethos* that is established socially and culturally (it can also be interpreted, as Zarader does, in psychoanalytic terms of the fusional relation between father and son). The implicit loyalty for the benefit of the father is fully inscribed in the framework of the components of the identifications-with of character (of an *ethos* in Bourdieu's sense). As Zarader rightly emphasizes, it is in a mirror relation reinforcing sameness that Igor constructs himself through the image and symbols of the father:

> In character understood as a fixed pole of personal identity, *I am the other*—blindly. Igor bears witness to this: he is completely traversed, structured, and "occupied" by Roger. All the relationships between father and son, in the film, underline this perverted sameness (where the same *is* the other); it is the *same* ring that Roger offers Igor, the *same* tattoo that he draws on his shoulder, the *same* song that they sing in chorus in the unforgettable Karaoke scene.[36]

The two categories of promises and loyalties ultimately refer to two irreducible relations to the other. As ethos or identification-with, the other is reduced to the same or is merged with the same: the alterity of the other is thus denied. As a promise kept and as firm commitment, the other maintains the self over time, without ever being merged with the self. Zarader, in her film analysis, goes further than Ricoeur himself. The imaginative and ethical variations in

the film by the Dardenne brothers considerably enhance the status of alterity implicated in the promise:

> If the character Igor embodies the difficult transition from idem-identity to ipse-identity, this is because he has two different experiences of alterity. His relation to Roger is the fruit of a fusion with the other; his relation to Hamidou/Assita breaks free from this fusion. . . . In order for the promise to be able to guarantee ipseity, it is not enough for it to be made *to an other*, it is necessary for this other to prohibit any confusion with myself. For that is what the film portrays. The other to whom Igor has given his word is the stranger, the Black, the clandestine that draws him outside of himself; the other is not the one who could merge with himself but the one who pulls him outside of himself.[37]

In itself the promise does not necessarily constitute an authentic ethical ipseity, which would be irreducible to an *ethos* or identifications-with. For a sociology inspired by Bourdieu, the entire practice of promising will be inscribed systematically within a system of exchange that is governed by an ethos. Such an ethos is itself defined by a set of internalized mutual obligations, which act like acquired dispositions that require individuals to keep their word in certain circumstances (that is why we have followed Bourdieu in talking about a sociological solution to the problem of the unity of the self). For a sociology or a philosophy inspired by Ricoeur, a practice like the promise will be analyzed preferably as an ethical competence of the individual who leaves the narrow framework of dispositional forces and who goes beyond the limits of the *habitus* (here one should speak of an ethical solution to the problem of self-continuity).

Yet, one could ask oneself whether the promise in ethical terms can emancipate the self from socially defined acts of promising. Just as one can ask whether an ipseity can be emancipated entirely from character, even in limit situations where one wanders from oneself. Would a being who was relieved of every lasting disposition still be socially human? Can we imagine a being defined solely by the

keeping of promises? Is not the radical disjunction of ipseity and *idem*-identity only a limit idea? Igor's story is perhaps less about the assumption of pure ipseity than the friction between the ethos of fidelity and the ethics of the promise. It is indeed essential to distinguish between an obligation to promise that is experienced purely as an internalized social (self-) constraint and a commitment or choice to keep one's word. But acts of promising are indexes of meaning that are rooted in cultures in the form of traditions. An individual's firm commitment to keep his or her word can only difficultly break from the sociocultural "grammar" of commitment and fidelity defined as identifications-with: norms, heroes, and characters in novels. That is to say that it is difficult to conceive of an ethical ipseity that would be completely detached from the social and cultural basis of lasting dispositions. This is the borderline between ethos and ethics.

If Ricoeur and Bourdieu share a similar conception of the "subject" up to a certain point, this is due largely to a post-structuralist terrain and a Spinozist ontological basis that they share in common, apart from the conflict between the intellectual traditions that contributed to their formation. Their shared conviction is that the "subject" is not the "master of meaning." Their shared ambition is to develop a "subject" that is more lucid about itself thanks to the long explanatory detour through the objectifications and determinations of the self (the long road of hermeneutics joins the project of a socio-analysis but does not merge with it). Their conceptions of personal identity both insist on the weight of lasting dispositions (whether one is speaking about character or habitus) that structure identities and orient behavior, without ever substantializing them (that is to say, by historicizing them).

Yet, Ricoeur distinguishes himself from Bourdieu by seeking to map out other components of personal identity. Besides narrative identity (which gives a "history" to character by putting it into a narrative), which largely escapes the objections of the biographical illusion, it is especially the given and kept word that provides an ethical solution to the problem of self-constancy, which is irreducible to the pole of lasting dispositions. One can conjecture that

Bourdieu would have seriously doubted the possibility of disjoining an ipseity from the pole of *habitus* and consequently would have placed all three components of personal identity distinguished by Ricoeur in the same register: they are structuring-structured structures. This clearly separates the path of the sociologist who does not want to venture onto the normative terrain of ethics from the path of the philosopher who is interested in constructing an ethics of "living with and for others in just institutions."

Beyond this "conflict between the faculties" of philosophy and sociology—which would place Bourdieu's political engagements and later "militant" writings in the collection "*Raisons d'agîr*" in contrast with the role of the promise in Ricoeur—there is a decisive issue concerning the connection and separation of the *ethos* with the ethics of the promise. We share Ricoeur's concern to clearly distinguish between what results from an internalized social disposition that is externalized in fidelity and what results from the keeping of a promise through a firm commitment. Yet, in a Bourdieusian vein, we can be suspicious equally of the ontological possibility of disconnecting ipseity from all rootedness in an *ethos*. We can then consider the active ethics of the promise as a lasting disposition (to keep one's word) that comes to be reflected and assumed. We thereby proceed from undergoing an unconscious disposition (on the level of the *ethos*) to the active consciousness of a position-taking, which counts as a speech-act and a commitment (on the ethical level).

NOTES

1. On Ricoeur's relation to the human sciences, see the volume edited by Scott Davidson, *Ricoeur across the Disciplines* (London: Continuum, 2010) and the work edited by F. Dosse, C. Delacroix, and P. Garcia., *Paul Ricoeur et les sciences humaines* (Paris: La Découverte, 2007).

2. See C. Gautier, *La force du social: Enquête philosophique sur la sociologie des pratiques de Pierre Bourdieu* (Paris: Cerf, 2012).

3. Philippe Corcuff, "Figures de l'individualité, de Marx aux sociologies contemporaines," *EspaceTemps.net* (2005), http://espacestemps.net/document1390.html. And Gérôme Truc, "Une désillusion narrative? De Bourdieu à Ricoeur," *Tracés* 8 (2005): 47–67.

4. Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, trans. Charles A. Kelbey (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 63.

5. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 121.

6. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 121.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Pierre Bourdieu, *Le sens pratique* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), 88.

10. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Paris: Minuit, 1979), 166.

11. Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power," in *In Other Words*: *Essays towards a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 123–39.

12. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 542.

13. Truc, "Une désillusion narrative? De Bourdieu à Ricoeur," 52.

14. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 121. Oddly, neither Corcuff nor Truc identify in Ricoeur's understanding of character a modality of the self that goes outside of the strict framework of the *ethos* and *habitus*. This "recognition of oneself" will be developed later, especially in Ricoeur's *The Course of Recognition*, trans. David Pellauer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

15. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 121.

16. This results clearly from the third part of Pierre Bourdieu's *Science of Science and Reflexivity*, trans. Richard Nice (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) when Bourdieu carries out a "sketch of self-analysis." Note that a less "causalist" reading of Bourdieu's work shows that the sociologist does not exclude certain reflexive practices in ordinary agents when it comes to taking a distance from a role or strategies of distinction. It is true, nevertheless, that reflexivity in the strong sense is identified with the *anamnesis* that is reserved to the work of the sociologist. Here reflexivity does not only signify a reflexive return on to oneself and one's practices, but an effort to seek the truth about oneself. And to clarify, the "deterministic" reading, or better the probabilistic reading, of the concept

of habitus is based on the fact that Bourdieu's analyses are generally situated on a macro-sociological level where the privileged tool of study remains statistics. This means that by using qualitative methods of observation on a micro-sociological or situational scale, habitus could seem less rigid, less causal, and less passive.

17. Paul Ricoeur, "Existence and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 22.

18. Paul Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text," in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 165.

19. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 122.

20. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 122–23.

21. Truc, "Une désillusion narrative? De Bourdieu à Ricoeur," 54.

22. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 148.

23. David Carr, "Epistémologie et ontologie du récit," in J. Greisch and R. Kearney, eds. *Les métamorphoses de la raison herméneutique* (Paris: Cerf, 1991), 205–14.

24. This project was sketched out in my article, Johann Michel, "Narrativité, narration, narratologie," *Revue européene des sciences sociales* 125 (2003): 125–42. There I distinguish between self-narratives and pieces of self-narratives that are discontinuous, incomplete, or not chronological, including the radically dissonant narratives that come from traumatic experiences.

25. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*: *Volume 3*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 248–49.

26. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 160.

27. Pierre Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 81–82.

28. Truc, "Une désillusion narrative? De Bourdieu à Ricoeur," 55.

29. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 21–22.

30. Luc Boltanski, *Love and Justice as Competences*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), 33.

31. Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques*, 84.

32. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 123–24.

33. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 165–66.

34. Ibid., 167–68.

35. Marlène Zarader, "La promesse et l'intrigue (phénoménologie, éthique, et cinéma)," *Cités* 33, no. 1 (2008): 83–96.

36. Ibid., 93.

37. Ibid., 94.

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THE SENSE OF EXCESS

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Ricoeur and Bourdieu really did not know each other well, even though their respective works have more to say to one another than is commonly believed. But, Ricoeur and Derrida, though from different generations, did meet many times over the course of their intellectual and personal lives. It would be mistaken to consider Derrida a distant disciple of Ricoeur, even considering the fact that he was his assistant at the Sorbonne.[2] But, by Derrida's own admission, the work and person of Ricoeur played an important role in at least two pivotal moments in his intellectual itinerary. First, when he was training in Husserl studies, "this great reader of Husserl, the translator of *Ideas*," "taught him to read" phenomenology and in a certain way "served as a guide."[3] Second, there was the time when Ricoeur led him to discover Levinas's *Totality and Infinity*, which only deepens the debt that Derrida recognized toward Ricoeur. Although there was never really a master-disciple relationship between them, there was undeniably a mutual admiration between the two, with Ricoeur also considering Derrida to be one of the best philosophers of his generation.[4] Unlike Ricoeur and Bourdieu, Ricoeur and Derrida were trained in very similar traditions and were also always engaging new paradigms. Along with their Husserlian

and Heideggerian roots in phenomenology, it is necessary to add their shared passage through Freud and the "structuralists," the continual reference to metaphysics, the omnipresence of Levinas, the importance granted to language and the symbolic dimension of life, and the related questions of memory, action, and justice.[5]

It should be noted that there is no systematic confrontation between Ricoeur and Derrida, with the notorious exception of an older debate over the status of metaphor and a more recent discussion about memory and forgiveness. These two exceptions are symptomatic of the times in which these respective debates took place: the structuralist and already post-structuralist context (the 1960s and 1970s) with regard to the status of metaphor; and the ethico-political context (the 1990s and 2000s) with regard to the issues of memory and justice. The fact that there was a shared intellectual heritage, shared concerns, and mutual esteem between Ricoeur and Derrida does not necessarily entail that their respective works overlap. Indeed, on an initial reading, it would seem that heterogeneity, if not an abyss, would prevail, in view of recent accounts of the two philosophers.[6] What could there be in common between, on the one side, the archetype of the Ricoeurian thinker who is often assimilated with the reformism of the Christian left, concerned with preserving traditions in order to reveal their creative power, and on the other side, the archetype of the Derridean thinker who symbolizes the political avant-garde of a whole generation, the defense of minorities struggling against the privilege of Western *Logos*? Should human action be understood under the sign of an innovative tradition that is governed by the play of interpretations and reinterpretations or under the sign of a "destruction" of cultural, metaphysical, ethical, and political heritages, inasmuch as they are deemed to be arbitrary sources of violence and domination?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to engage in a partly *indirect dialogue* between these two philosophical archetypes, because Ricoeur and Derrida's discussions remained relatively private. It is thus necessary for us to take up the stance of a philosophizing third party, not with the illusory aim of reconciliation or of a false syncretism, but with the goal of inquiring into an intellectual

proximity that is always contradicted by an equally essential difference.

INVERTED HEGELIANISM AND BROKEN HEGELIANISM

If there is a "Hegelian temptation" for Ricoeur and Derrida, this is because the "ghost of Hegel is always leaping out of some closet,"[7] whether it comes to considering the possibility of totalizing the historical process, the dynamic of the State or even the adequation of the subject with itself. If there is a "Hegelian temptation," this is due to the very movement of philosophy as it seeks to become a system, to return to itself, in a totality without infinity. To answer the "Hegelian challenge" does not mean, for Ricoeur or for Derrida, an indifference toward the specter of totality but a true intellectual struggle in which they offer their own philosophical resistance by introducing a post-Hegelian time.

Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology, though, seems to be wed to the dialectic employed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Refusing the Cartesian view of a subject that coincides with itself, Ricoeur shares with Hegel the ontological presupposition that life is essentially desire.[8] To this, Spinoza's "effort to be" as well as Jean Nabert's "originary affirmation" must also be added.[9] The quasi-vitalist dimension of Ricoeur's anthropology (in the narrow sense of the primacy granted to "life" and "desire"), though often misunderstood, does not destroy the idea of an attainment of oneself, given that it proceeds from a position of the human in being that prevents any prior adequation of the subject with itself. Thus, following a teleology that Ricoeur borrows from Hegel, "immediate consciousness," initially lost as an *arche*, is overcome through a "secondary consciousness." In effect, consciousness remains empty as long as it has not passed through a reflection on all the "figures of spirit," all the "documents" deposited by life and history. After Hegel, Ricoeur insists that the subject

> is never the subject one supposes. But if the subject is to attain to its true being, it is not enough for it to discover the inadequacy of its self-awareness, or even to discover the power of desire that posits it in existence. The subject must also discover that the process of "becoming conscious," through which it appropriates the meaning of its existence as desire and effort, does not belong to it, but belongs to the meaning that is formed in it. The subject must mediate self-consciousness through spirit or mind, that is, through the figures that give a *telos* to this "becoming conscious."[10]

The importance granted to *mediation* reveals a process of reflection that does not operate in a void, as in the case of the apperception of the Cartesian *cogito*. Instead, it becomes articulated through the subject's projection onto its own individual, cultural, and historical existence, in order to attain it. Here one can better understand why Ricoeur grafts hermeneutics onto a mediate and reflexive philosophy. In order to better understand and possess oneself, it is necessary to interpret the traces in which life is objectified. Ricoeur recognizes this movement in Hegelian phenomenology:

> An exegesis of consciousness would consist in a progression through all the spheres of meaning that a given consciousness must encounter and appropriate in order to reflect itself as a self, a human, adult, conscious self . . . consciousness is simply the internalization of this movement, which must be recaptured in the objective structures of institutions, monuments, works of art and culture.[11]

It is in terms of "Renouncing Hegel" that Ricoeur seeks to carry out his "work of mourning" the German philosopher. "To renounce" does not mean "to abandon" or "to deny" but rather "to continue to pass through" and at the same time to resist each time the "seductive power" of the Hegelian system—even while it is felt as a "wound."[12] The sign of this resistance is nothing other than a plea for difference instead of and in place of the work of *totalization*.

Ricoeur thus retains the Hegelian dialectic but purifies it of *absolute knowledge*.

The fact that there is a difference that impedes every process of totalization first becomes apparent on the level of desire. Casting Freud against Hegel, Ricoeur seeks to show that the mediation of desire through an "apprenticeship of signs and figures" has no end. "Total reflection" is continually postponed, delayed, and deferred. As such, desire is suppressed because it is always mediated. In addition, it is refractory to every meaningful claim, as with the "pure affects" theorized by Freud. They are not tied to any representation but belong to a mechanism of "pure energetics." It is in this sense, Ricoeur suggests, that

> life is unsurpassable. And the very term for the self—*Selbst*—proclaims that self-identity continues to be carried by this self-difference, by this ever-recurring otherness residing in life. It is life that becomes the other, in and through which the self ceaselessly achieves itself.[13]

Absolute knowledge is also "wounded" when Ricoeur rejects the immanent teleology of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* where a historical "figure" expresses the truth of what precedes it. It is here that the *hubris* of the Hegelian philosophy of history comes into play. For Hegel, history has a univocal sense: it is "the self-realization of Spirit" in freedom. At this point, Ricoeur's resistance is expressed on a moral and political level. Nothing in history, according to him, can be reduced to a univocal sense, even if one accepts the justification of the "cunning of Reason." With respect to the realization of Freedom, the cunning of reason justifies the trampling of "many an innocent flower underfoot." In other words, it is in the name of the "victims of history" that Ricoeur rejects any totalization of historical processes, especially when such a totalization is developed by a consciousness that seeks to become sovereign. This questioning of absolute knowledge, moreover, is tied to the inability to sum up the totality of "signs" or "figures" in consciousness. Due to the finitude of all understanding, the self-reappropriation of the subject is an

"infinite task." If everything does indeed involve mediations, they can only be "imperfect." This difference separates Ricoeur from Hegel and prevents consciousness, even that of the philosopher of absolute knowledge, from determining the univocal sense of history, especially when this is a History of the "victors."

With Ricoeur, the absolute system is shattered and leaves behind a *broken Hegelianism*. Ricoeur's ethico-political resistance is not foreign to the "totalitarian haunting" that lurks throughout his work. With the fields of cadavers that the two world wars left behind, he can no longer seriously endorse a "cunning of Reason." In this sense, to break politically with Hegel means to cease believing in a theodicy and to undo Europe's claim to totalize the History of the world:

> Eurocentrism died with the political suicide of Europe in the First World War, with the ideological rending produced by the October Revolution, and with the withdrawal of Europe from the world scene, along with the fact of decolonization and the unequal—and probably antagonistic—development that opposes the industrialized nations to the rest of the world. . . . What has come undone is the very substance of what Hegel sought to make into a concept. Difference has turned against development, conceived of as a *Stufengang*.[14]

By affirming a philosophy of difference against Hegelian totalization, Ricoeur meets up with the Derridean philosophical project. Are not the two philosophers concerned with the same difference at the heart of the *cogito* and at the heart of the historical and cultural process? When Derrida moves in the direction of "deconstruction," he does not only do away with the Hegelian system but also seeks to show the impulses behind the entire Western metaphysical tradition. It is clear that his endeavor is indebted to the philosophical gesture introduced by Heidegger. It is a critique of metaphysical concepts that aims to go back to their sources—namely, to the "onto-theological" thought that bears witness to the "waywardness of being." Heideggerian deconstruction also has a positive and revelatory aim:

to shed light on the meaning of Being through the history of Western metaphysics and to reveal the existential origin concealed there.

With Jacques Derrida, the same concept is certainly taken up from Heidegger, but it is directed toward a different problem: to demonstrate, underneath the structures of meaning, the activity of "tracing," of inscribing the "separations" (spatial and temporal) that produce *différance*. Derrida thus portrays the impure unity of a "differing" (detour, delay, etc.) whose economy exceeds the resources of classical *Logos*. Here Derridean deconstruction crosses paths with Ricoeurian hermeneutics, provided that their shared ambitions are to show that "meaning," instead of being transparent, cannot claim any totalization or "presence." By placing an emphasis on "disproportion," on the "non-mastery of meaning," and on the "fracturing of the Cogito," Ricoeur and Derrida together participate in the "deconstruction" of *Logos*, Ideas, the Spirit, and the Subject.

Ricoeur, as is well known, never presented himself as a partisan for "deconstruction," in the precise sense that Derrida gives to the term. The step that Ricoeur refuses to take is none other than the radical reductionism of "deconstruction," when it reduces the entire history of metaphysics to a philosophy of presence. One must be able to totalize the history of thought, as Derrida does, in order to claim to unmask an invariant that constitutes it in a unilateral way. At once, the thinker of deconstruction is situated on the deepest "strata" of the history of thought: unmasking the myth of primitive people in Lévi-Strauss, the myth of the presence of speech to itself in Rousseau,[15] and the myth of the original scene in Freud.[16] Everything happens as if the Derridean enterprise sought to invert the Hegelian project. It substitutes a thought of difference, separation, and alterity, for a thought of presence, unity, and identity, but it does so by ultimately repeating a dialectic that is close to it. It "totalizes" the history of thought under the meta-concept of presence. In this sense, one ought to characterize Derridean deconstruction as an inverted Hegelianism, in contrast with the broken Hegelianism that best characterizes Ricoeurian hermeneutics.

The essentially plural conception of the history of philosophy found in Ricoeur prohibits the prophecy of "a death of metaphysics"

and the reduction of metaphysics to the search for presence. Ricoeur makes this clear in an interview with Carlos Oliveira:

> What is called "metaphysics" still has a lot of unexplored and unexploited possibilities, especially if one privileges in the notion of being not what leads back to "substance" and to "presence" but what results from a philosophy of action.[17]

In fact, Ricoeur does not reject "deconstruction" as such, but he does reject the abuse of it by some of Derrida's followers, particularly in the United States. Ricoeur distinguishes clearly between ideological uses and critical analyses in the deconstructive agenda:

> I believe that [deconstruction] has a very strong critical value and could provide a way for metaphysics not to be reduced to a single form. In terms of the unexplored resources of metaphysics, I would say that the concept of presence requires extremely complex analyses. . . . The utility of "deconstruction" could thus be to show how a number of philosophical paths are now closed, but it is, in my view, only the flip side of another program—a program of reconstruction—whose undertaking is perceived as a problem.[18]

This "program of reconstruction" can be found, for example, in Derrida's invitation to develop a new type of writing, thinking, and living that exceeds logocentric closure and worn metaphysical categories. At the very heart of the movement of "deconstructing" metaphysics, new creations of meaning are possible (as with Heidegger, *deconstruction* seeks at the same time to be the condition for *recollection*).

In spite of the Derridean call for an active memory that creates meaning, Ricoeur's resistance to the reductionism of "deconstruction" remains intact and accentuates the difference between a post-structuralist hermeneutics and a post-structuralist deconstruction. This resistance is born at the beginning of the 1970s in the course of the famous debate between the two philosophers over the status of metaphor.

On a first front, Ricoeur struggles against the Derridian radicalization of the Heideggerian position that tends "not to distinguish" between philosophy and poetry, concept and metaphor, *Logos* and mythos. Derrida's thesis is that rational discourse tends to mask the metaphors that have been worn away by time.[19] To be sure, Ricoeur willingly accepts, in a very Heideggerian way,[20] the necessity of thinking the idea of a "metaphorical truth,"[21] the demand to surpass the sole model of truth as adequation, and the promise of connecting the rational and the metaphorical differently. But to connect them differently does not mean confusing two types of discourse, as Derrida is tempted to do after Heidegger. There is at least an autonomy of concepts and of metaphors that protects them from any confusion. It is in this sense as well that the "symbol gives rise to thought": metaphors, myths, and symbols are capable of a reflective repetition in philosophical discourse, but without this leading to an indistinct ground.[22]

On a second front, Ricoeur struggles against the principle of closure in Derridean structuralism. The issue is on both a linguistic and an ontological level. By remaining the prisoner of semiology, Derrida is restricted to a theory of signs that does not only exist on the phonic order but is thought in terms of separations, spacings, temporalizations, and *différances*.[23] Ricoeur does not contest the pertinence of this post-structuralist renewal through the central concept of *différance*, as long as this semiology leaves room for a semantics and an ontology. To say something is to say something about being—that is, something about something outside of language, even though it is always said through language. The radicality of the Derridean view results in the loss of a referent, whereas the whole ontological project in *The Rule of Metaphor* aspires to escape from the closure of signs in order to open onto the world. To the play of *différances*, Ricoeur prefers the ontological vehemence of the word in which the *readability* of the world emerges.[24]

It is thus necessary to maintain a sharp dividing line between Derrida's "inverted Hegelianism" and Ricoeur's "broken Hegelianism," between Derrida's post-structuralist deconstruction and Ricoeur's post-structuralist hermeneutics. Moreover, this dividing line

has ethical-political consequences that result from each of these paths: the defense of *différance*, in the Derridean perspective, threatens to give rise to conflicts or the folding of communities onto themselves to the extent that there is no longer anything that allows for the arbitration and reconciliation of the differences between them. Everything happens as if the defense of *différance* should be the counterpoint to Hegelian totalization. There is no longer the violence of a historical reconciliation, "trampling the innocent flowers on its path," that would integrate all differences into a single dominating *Logos*, but instead there is the shock of communities or subjectivities that exalt their own differences and have contempt for those of others, thus ruining the hope for political reconciliation through mutual recognition. "Difference revolting against development," whose sense and world-historical advance Europe had sought to control. Derrida and Ricoeur both recognize the legitimacy of this revolt that allowed peoples, communities, and individuals to affirm their difference against the violence of Western *Logos*. But, to Ricoeur, the worst outcome would be for difference to turn back against itself, in an *anti-Logos* where no shared discourse could emerge and where there would be no sharing of words or things.

THE KANTIAN HORIZON AND HEIDEGGERIAN ONTOLOGY

Ultimately, the concept of *difference* does not have the same status in Ricoeur and Derrida. From the Derridean side, the "deconstruction" of presence leads to a defense of difference, which itself becomes totalizing. From the Ricoeurian side, the refusal of a full presence (of the subject to itself, of history to itself, etc.) is inscribed in the infinite horizon of conquest and reappropriation, thanks to "the apprenticeship of signs."[25] With Ricoeur, presence is not given at the outset. It will never be possessed, given the fact of the finitude of understanding. Instead, it is always projected and always something to be achieved. So it is necessary to distinguish between, on

the one side, the *radical finitude* envisioned by Heidegger and Derrida, which does not leave room for any recomposition of the subject, and on the other side, the *relative finitude* conceived by Ricoeur, which leaves room for hope and the quest for the self.

This distinction leads down two different hermeneutic paths. In order to avoid the threat of reintroducing a subjectivist metaphysics, the "ontological hermeneutics" practiced by Heidegger and Derrida does without any reflexivity of the subject. The "methodological hermeneutics" introduced by Ricoeur calls both for reflexivity and a systematic confrontation with the human sciences, but it does so without making the subject an original, foundational source. This confrontation with the human sciences brings Ricoeur closer to the post-structuralism of Foucault and Bourdieu but distances him from Derrida. Whereas ontological hermeneutics proceeds directly from "understanding" on the level of being, methodological hermeneutics starts with the "derivative modes" of understanding that are "objectified" in the human sciences. This is why epistemological questions relative to the human sciences, which are so essential for Dilthey and Ricoeur, are of secondary importance, even nonessential, for Heidegger and Derrida:

> With Heidegger's radical manner of questioning, the problems that initiated our investigation not only remain unresolved but are lost from sight. How, we asked, can an *organon* be given to exegesis, to the clear comprehension of texts? How can the historical sciences be founded in the face of the natural sciences? How can the conflict of rival interpretations be arbitrated? These problems are not properly considered in a fundamental hermeneutics, and this by design: this hermeneutics is intended not to resolve them but to dissolve them.[26]

This critique is not aimed at discrediting ontological hermeneutics as such, but is designed to found it otherwise. If "Dasein only exists through understanding," it is necessary to show concretely how this mode of "understanding" is expressed by

> substituting, for the short route of the Analytic of Dasein, the long route which begins by analyses of language. In this way we will continue to keep in contact with the disciplines which seek to practice interpretation in a methodical manner, and we will resist the temptation to separate *truth*, characteristic of understanding, from the *method* put into operation by disciplines which have sprung from exegesis.[27]

These epistemological questions are at the heart of Ricoeur's anthropology and morality, for it is indeed the understanding of oneself that Ricoeur is concerned with. If "understanding" is the being of *Dasein*, it is precisely through a reflection on the "derivative modes" of understanding that it can understand itself. What is the "apprenticeship of signs" through which the human being recovers itself, if not a reflection on the "derivative modes" in which life is objectified? This is why the detour through the human and social sciences is necessary, as both Ricoeur and Bourdieu propose in their own ways. The same conclusion cannot be found in Derrida. For him, it was never a question of recovering a "subject" purified of its beliefs and illusions, through reflexivity and a detour through the human and social sciences. On this point, Derrida remains very Heideggerian. He sticks with the fundamental, with ontology, even if it is broken and "differentiated" as an ontology of *différance*.

To reformulate the *différend* that distinguishes Ricoeur and Derrida, it is fruitful to open up an indirect dialogue with Kant's second critique.[28] Whereas Derrida prohibits any conquest of the subject by enclosing it within the circle of difference, Ricoeur ultimately inscribes his own broken Hegelianism within a Kantian horizon, in the "style of a post-Hegelian Kantianism" that he borrows from Eric Weil. Ricoeur's Kantianism has a paradoxical status, however, inasmuch as it challenges "the autonomy of autonomy" in the moral subject. In this respect, it should be described as a Kantianism without a moral self-foundation. Instead of being based entirely on an original connection between freedom and law, the moral subject, as Ricoeur understands it, inherits an ethical world that is already structured. This heteronomy is not only connected to the "empirical

dimension" (desires, communal belonging, etc.) affecting the moral subject's claims to self-legislation but also concerns the transcendental sphere. Ricoeur thus points to a first "aporetic place" of Kantian morality in challenging the "apodeictically certain character" of the supposedly original relation between freedom and the moral law: Is there not instead, concealed beneath the pride of the assertion of autonomy, the avowal of a certain receptivity, to the extent that the law, in determining freedom, *affects* it?[29] Everything happens here as if the "fact of reason" borrowed a mode of affection from sensibility, even though it is a relation between two entities on the transcendental level (freedom and the law).

Remaining in his attitude of suspicion, Ricoeur locates a second "place" of aporia in Kant's treatment of "respect" in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The problem concerns the inadequation between the self-positing that is characteristic of autonomy and the dimension of reciprocity implied by respect,[30] respect being a feeling (belonging to the level of affectations) that is incompatible with the pure spontaneity of reason. If autonomy owes nothing to experience, how can one understand the role played by respect? The Kantian solution splits affectivity in two. By separating "the good grain" (the pure feeling of respect imprinted on the human heart) from the "chaff" (sensible inclinations), Kant hopes to preserve the purity of moral autonomy:

> After this, everything rests on the division, within the domain of affects, between those that continue to belong to the pathology of desire and those that can be held to constitute the very mark of reason in feeling: namely, in the negative mode, the humiliation of self-love and, in the positive mode, the veneration for the power of reason in us.[31]

This solution, however, does not convince Ricoeur. The splitting of affectivity in two does not solve the more difficult problem that respect poses—namely, the introduction "of a passive element into the very heart of autonomy." Autonomy cannot found itself, because respect leads practical reason toward the mode of a passively

received affection. The point that Ricoeur wants to make is to call into question the independence of moral autonomy.[32] This critique does not amount, however, purely and simply in letting go of Kantian philosophy. If, in light of the influence of receptivity, autonomy is never entirely self-present, it gets reconceptualized as a "task" and a "horizon," in turn. Anne-Marie Roviello resituates Ricoeur's Kantianism within the problem of the "regulative horizon":

> The regulative Idea or the Kantian postulate does not correspond as much with the attempt to reach an ultimate basis as much as they represent a way of responding to the fundamental paradox of our modernity (and our post-modernity) and of taking on this paradox: we have renounced the naïve reassurance of a dogmatic discourse about foundations but we cannot and will not renounce the *question* of such a foundation, nor the search for the ultimate meaning, a search that is part of existence itself.[33]

One should then understand the idea of "effort" in Ricoeur as an infinite reappropriation of the self: "to overcome the distance that separates oneself from oneself is thus not to appropriate a hidden meaning that has been hypostasized as a positive origin, instead it is to continually recreate this meaning through interpretative reflection by giving oneself the regulative idea of an ultimate meaning."[34] The regulative Kantianism, without a moral self-foundation, can be interpreted as a response to an ontology that would seek to go beyond good and evil. This is aimed directly toward Heidegger, and through him, Derrida. In sections 54 through 60 of *Being and Time*,[35] Heidegger created a separate (but decisive) place for moral conscience (*Gewissen*) characterized by a call (*Anruf*) that emerges from strangeness, from *Dasein*'s condition of thrownness, and that is presented as an "injunction to be": "the existential interpretation of conscience should expose an existent attestation in Dasein itself of its ownmost potentiality-of-being. Conscience attests not by making something known in an undifferentiated way, but by a summons that calls forth to being-guilty."[36] While there is indeed a question of "debt" here, Heidegger does not envision this as a "debt" to

others: the "fault" consists of not being oneself. Moreover, if a "voice" speaks to *Dasein*, from above, not only is it silent but it, too, only comes from oneself:

> The call is precisely something that *we ourselves* have neither planned, nor prepared for, nor willfully brought about. "It" calls, against our expectations and even against our will. On the other hand, the call without doubt does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes *from* me, and yet *over* me.[37]

The strategy behind this threefold characterization of moral conscience is paradoxically one of "de-moralization." Heideggerian moral conscience is not only emancipated from any reference to others; it is also conceived in a Nietzschean way as "beyond good and evil." To clarify, for Ricoeur, Heidegger's *Gewissen* is on the wrong side of an "authentic" morality. Although the author of *Oneself as Another* retains the structure of the call and of height from the Heideggerian analysis, he rejects almost everything else. Against the call from oneself to oneself, Ricoeur privileges "the injunction coming from the other." Against the silence of the indeterminate call, he prefers the "speaking" voice of the other who enjoins me to "live with and for others in just institutions."

If Ricoeur's analysis is followed all the way through to the end, the result is that morality and radical ontology are entirely incompatible. This is not the Derridean position, however, which is situated at the opposite extreme from that of Ricoeur. To understand Derrida's careful reading, it is necessary to step back a moment and consider what Heidegger means by ontology. Among its various meanings, Derrida retains "letting be," which concerns "all possible forms of the existent, and even those which, by essence, cannot be transformed into 'objects of comprehension.'"[38] "Letting be," for Derrida, points to the complete opposite of an "appropriation" or a "reduction to the same" (in the Levinasian sense). It implies "letting the other be" by considering the other as "absolutely other." Heideggerian ontology could then be presented as "gift" and "disposses-

sion." For, if one follows the Derridean interpretation, letting the other be "other" consists by definition in holding the other in respect. Through this master stroke, Derrida rediscovers Kant through Heidegger: "if it belongs to the essence of the other first and foremost to be an 'interlocutor' and to be 'interpellated,' then the 'letting-be' will let the Other be what it is, will respect it as interpellated-interlocutor."[39] Derrida thus reverses the moral critique of Heidegger put forward by Levinas and echoed by Ricoeur:

> [O]ntology conditions the respect for the other *as what it is*: other. Without this acknowledgment, which is not a knowledge, or let us say without this "letting be" of an existent (Other) as something existing outside me in the essence of what it is (first in its alterity), no ethics would be possible.[40]

Faced with this interpretative reversal, Ricoeur would certainly have registered his disagreement. Here we can offer an interpretation based on the spirit of his moral philosophy. First of all, the problem is tied to the fact that Heideggerian "morality," if it can even be characterized in this way, is contained within a broader fundamental ontology. More precisely, the theme of "letting be" concerns all beings in general, without particular regard for other people. Derrida agrees with this point, when he asserts that "Letting-be concerns all possible forms of the existent, and even those which, by essence, cannot be transformed into 'objects of comprehension'."[41] How can one speak, in such a context, about respect in the Kantian sense? Heidegger remains below the fundamental distinction between "things" and "persons," although only the latter can be treated as ends in themselves, from a Kantian perspective. Rejecting this distinction, Heidegger speaks about "things" in general, not as things to be handled but as things to be the object of our "care," of our "protection," and of our "respect."[42] Here one finds Heidegger's opposition to technology and his preference for an ecology of things, and his preference for Rilke's cosmic poetics over traditional humanism or the "humanism of the other man."

Through these exegetical questions, the same deep disagreement emerges from the indirect dialogue between Ricoeur and Derrida. Ricoeur's hermeneutics takes note of the finitude of the subject on the anthropological level as well as the moral one. But it refuses to follow the path of a radical finitude, in the Derridean or Heideggerian fashion, due to the roles reserved for reflexivity and for the idea of a regulative horizon. Ricoeur cannot follow "deconstruction" when it leads directly toward the removal of the morality and the responsibility of the subject. Certainly, Derrida would reply that Ricoeur is still too humanistic and moralistic to allow himself to be led into the troubled waters of a radical hermeneutics that would be unable to respond to "evil" and the "tragedy of action." And it is perhaps paradoxical for Ricoeurian philosophy to offer to develop a post-Kantian morality at the same time as subscribing to the principle that "the subject is not the master of meaning," unless he were to reformulate his anthropology in terms of a Christian conviction:

> In this regard, I rediscover Heidegger's critique of the Cartesian *cogito* completely within a religious tradition. I am not the basis of my own existence; I am thrown to myself. I am responsible, but this is based on a fundamental gift of existence. In this sense, Heidegger's critique of humanism, or Foucault's critique of the claims of the subject, have never bothered me, because they lead in exactly the same direction of my own conviction, namely, that the subject is not the center of everything, that it is not the master of meaning. The subject is a student, a disciple of meaning.[43]

But in contrast with Heidegger, Foucault, or Derrida, it is important to recall that Ricoeur seeks to justify the demand for responsibility and for a conquest of the subject. It is this major difference, deriving from both the Christian and Kantian sources, that keeps the "disciple of meaning" from falling into "non-sense." Care for the other is clearly one of the major precepts transmitted by the Judeo-Christian faith that Ricoeur does not hesitate to make his own, especially when he finds this formulation in Levinas's writing. The establishment of ethics as a first philosophy—instead of and in place

of Heideggerian ontology—is the immense debt that he considers himself to owe to the author of *Totality and Infinity*.

Let's recall that the conceptual network employed by Levinas in order to establish an ethics "beyond essence" seeks to refuse any precedence of the self over the other. This ethics goes all the way to the hyperbolic proposal of an abolition of the self and a "substitution" for the other. The idea of responsibility, as paradoxical as it may be, does not amount to giving the self any initiative whatsoever, for example, in a Kantian fashion. Responsibility results from an injunction of the other, who is thereby placed in the position of an absolute master. It is through this "condition of being a hostage," Levinas writes, "that there can be in the world pity, compassion, pardon, and proximity."[44] Levinas thus pushes the dissolution of the subject as far as possible; it is not just deprived of all initiative but also of every intention and of every intentionality, in the Husserlian sense. Here one is at the opposite extreme from Heideggerian *Gewissen*: the injunction does not come from *Dasein* itself but from the Other who stands in the place of the God who reveals the Commandments without showing Himself, who becomes "Word" without appearing, and who demands obedience without consent.

From Ricoeur's side, he can readily subscribe to Levinas's ambition to leave the ontological circle and to reinscribe the call and response structure on the level of an ethics of the responsibility for the other. Yet, Ricoeur asks whether responsibility for the other can do entirely without something like a self. Ricoeur's hermeneutic endeavor is to show that although Levinasian ethics abolishes the "egological," egocentric, and egoistic tradition, it is nonetheless forced to presuppose a disposition of welcome toward the call of the other—that is, an ipseity that is able to attest to itself by keeping its given word. How could responsibility be maintained, if no one were facing the other? In order to guarantee a responsibility for the other, Ricoeur preserves a residue of subjectivity. Without the power to be a self-foundation, the subject attests to its ability to keep promises in face of the injunction of the other: "the injunction is primordially attestation, or the injunction risks not being heard and the self not being affected in the mode of being-enjoined."[45]

Here one can better assess how the attestation of ipseity in Ricoeur is distinct from moral self-foundation in Kant, from ontological demoralization in Heidegger and from ethical desubjectification in Levinas: the idea of moral attestation cannot attain the sort of assurance and certitude that are found in Kant, if one considers the original relation between freedom and the law. Attestation refers more modestly to the sort of confidence that the self can put into its words and deeds, knowing that this confidence is always subject to suspicion. But without this "confidence," without this attestation, responsibility for the other would never come to light, without a "self" to respond to it. For Ricoeur, it is thus a matter of preserving

> a capacity of reception (*accueil*), of discrimination, and of recognition that, in my opinion, belongs to another philosophy of the Same than that to which the philosophy of the Other replies. If interiority were indeed determined solely by the desire for retreat and closure, how could it ever hear a word addressed to it, which would seem so foreign to it that this word would be as nothing for an isolated existence? One has to grant a capacity of reception (*accueil*) to the self that is the result of a reflexive structure, better defined by its power of reconsidering preexisting objectifications than by an initial preparation.[46]

With Derrida, one does not find anything close to this hermeneutic process that attempts not only to reestablish an ethical form of subjectivity, "as a capacity of welcome (*accueil*)," and also takes into account forms of exchange in which the structure of reciprocity prevails. Derridean suspicion is directed at a more radical level, without getting involved in a subtle dialectic between the Same and the Other. The Derridean suspicion goes to the very root of Levinasian ethics: to the possibility of having discourse with the Other without doing the Other violence. Starting from the first moment when Levinas takes the risk of speaking about the other—and in philosophical language especially—"he contradicts himself" and thus he himself commits an ethical violence against the absoluteness of the Other. In reality, according to Derrida, Levinasian discourse cannot escape from Heideggerian ontology, Husserlian phenome-

nology, or the Hegelian system. The Levinasian Other is thus recaptured by the infernal machine of Derridean deconstruction. If it is originally violent, then discourse, as Derrida shows, "can only do itself violence, deny itself in order to affirm itself, make war on the war that institutes violence without ever being able, as discourse, to reappropriate this negativity."[47] Derrida adds:

> Levinas *in fact* does speak about the infinitely other. But by refusing to recognize it as an intentional modification of the ego—which for him would be a violent and totalitarian *act*—he deprives himself the foundation of his own language. What authorizes him to say "infinitely other," if the infinitely other does not appear as such in the zone he calls the Same, which is the neutral level of transcendental description? To return, as the only possible point of departure, to the intentional phenomenon in which the other appears as other and lends itself to language, to *every possible language*, is perhaps to make oneself complicit at least, and to entitle—in the critical sense—the fact of violence. But, it would then become an irreducible zone of facticity, an original, transcendental violence, prior to any ethical choice presupposed by ethical non-violence.[48]

Even in his homage to Levinas's philosophy, Derrida differs from Ricoeurian dialectic in that he does not seek to show its limits in order to then include it in a movement of recovery. Instead, he methodically seeks to show its impossibility. Whereas Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach, here as elsewhere, is dialectic but purified of an absolute knowledge, Derrida's deconstructionist approach is willingly aporetic. It is carried out here with brio by challenging the possibility of a rigorous distinction between a "violent," "totalitarian" discourse that infringes on the other and an ethical discourse (Levinas's discourse in this case) that reveals the infinity of the Other. The fact is that all language, by definition, is essentially "violent" and "reductive." Levinas's own discourse does not escape this fact, even if it is excessive, hyperbolic, and metaphorical. In writing about the Other, it hopes in vain hope to rupture the all-powerful philosophical *Logos*. The violence of Derridean discourse

itself, in support of its inverted Hegelianism, consists of reducing Levinasian hyperbole to the Same.

THE THIRD AND THE QUESTION OF JUSTICE

To be sure, it is in opposition to this attempted reduction that Ricoeur's talk in homage to Levinas should be understood.[49] It is surprising that Ricoeur does not mention Derrida's reading at any moment of this talk. Yet in my view, Ricoeur implicitly takes a stance in response to the radical problem posed by Derrida. Indeed, Levinas himself already raised the difficulty of speaking about the Other in the margins of his text (though Derrida remains silent about that). Levinas is not duped, because he is aware of the act of violence that he commits in speaking about the Other:

> The very discussion which we are at this moment elaborating about the signification, the diachrony and the transcendence of the approach of the beyond being—a discussion that seeks to be philosophical—is thematization, a synchronization of terms, a recourse to systematic language, constant use of the verb to be, leading back into the fold of being every thought that is supposedly beyond being. But are we duped by this subreption?[50]

Levinas did not only anticipate the force of Derrida's objection; additionally, he already answered it. And it is up to Ricoeur to insist on the way out of this aporia. In what case, then, can one speak about the Other? Not as the same (or the self) under the threat of destroying the infinity of the Other, but as the third. The status of the third plays a pivotal role in Levinas's conceptual architecture, to the extent that it serves as the place for an important transition from ethics to political justice. The third represents the other outside of the exclusive face-to-face or the one-for-the-other, or, in other words, the "one from afar" in contrast with the "neighbor." Once the third no longer has the guarantee of infinite solicitude, it is neces-

sary to foresee, according to Levinas, another mode of responsibility:

> The fact that the other, my neighbor, is also a third party with respect to another, who is also a neighbor, is the birth of thought, consciousness, justice and philosophy.[51]

The third marks the birth of thought and of consciousness to the extent that the infinity of the other is thematized and objectified. It marks the birth of justice because it is henceforth a matter of comparing, measuring, and equalizing between the "infinities." It marks the birth of philosophy that makes a discourse about the Other possible:

> [I]t is justice that allows one to *thematize* the type of Saying that allows one to philosophize. But from what position, what post shall one speak? From the position, the place of the third party, namely that other who is not the near by the far, the stranger, as in the Bible, as in Plato's *The Sophist*?[52]

And Ricoeur confirms Levinas's point by responding indirectly to Derrida's objection:

> [T]he position of the third party, the place from which justice speaks, is also the place from which Levinas speaks, inasmuch as his Saying is inscribed in a Said which is the book we read.[53]

It nonetheless remains the case that the third does not have the same status in Ricoeur and Levinas. With Levinas, it is a justification of the third after the fact. With Ricoeur, the third is included from the outset in an ethics of plurality:

> The idea of plurality suggests the extension of interhuman relations to all those who are left outside of the face-to-face encounter of an "I" and a "you" and remain third parties. The third party, however, is straightaway, and no pun intended, the inclusive middle term (*tiers inclus*) within the plurality that constitutes power. In this way there is a limit imposed on every effort

> to reconstruct the social bond on the sole basis of a strictly dyadic dialogical relation. This plurality includes third parties who will never be faces. A plea for the anonymous in the literal sense of the term is therefore included in the fullest aim of the true life.[54]

This point clearly explains the relatively minor role that Levinas reserves for a theory of justice in his work and, conversely, its considerable role in Ricoeur's work. In a sense, Ricoeur's discourse begins where Levinas's ends—with the third. It is also the reason why, in the "little ethics" developed in *Oneself as Another*, "life with and for others" cannot be conceived without "just institutions." Here the Aristotelian dimension of his political philosophy prevails: the *telos* of the human is not only to live in a city and to have a dialogical or communal relation with others; interpersonal and institutional relations cannot do without reciprocal and egalitarian structures. What follows, then, is the importance that Ricoeur accords to justice and law:

> The fact that the aim of living well in a way encompasses the sense of justice is implied in the very notion of the other. The other is also other than the "you." Correlatively, justice extends further than face-to-face encounters. Two assertions are involved here: according to the first, living well is not limited to interpersonal relations but extends to the life of institutions. Following the second, justice presents ethical features that are not contained in solicitude, essentially a requirement of *equality*.[55]

The program of justice elaborated in the Derridean viewpoint is completely different. Whereas Ricoeur remains faithful to the classical ideal of justice as the search for equality and reciprocity ("to give each his due"), Derrida defines justice in terms that are diametrically opposed to this ideal. If the Ricoeurian position still remains very Aristotelian, Derrida's position surprisingly follows in the path of Levinas. This is surprising for two reasons. First, Derrida's most recent writings on ethics and justice[56] seem to mark a break from his earlier work that avoided these questions, or at least only show their

aporias (we have seen this with respect to the *mise en abyme* of discourse about the Other).[57] If so, one should perhaps speak of a rediscovery of Levinas in order to justify an ethical discourse about justice. Second, the meaning given to justice, in reference to Levinas, occurs in the context of the "infinite responsibility for the other." For Derrida earlier showed that Levinas's own introduction of the theme of justice is supported not in relation to the Other but in relation to the third. In other words, the introduction of justice gives rise to equality, comparison, and representation and thus contradicts the closure of an exclusive responsibility for the Other, the Unique. In fact, it is Levinas who is responsible for this conceptual shift. Instead of defining justice in terms of a calculated proportionality, Levinas is the one who defines justice in terms of an infinite responsibility for the other and an absolute asymmetry: "the relation with the other—that is to say, justice" and justice "as straightforwardness of the welcome of the face."[58]

Though they are inspired by Levinas's terminology, Ricoeur and Derrida both privilege a diametrically opposed meaning of the concept of justice: the ideal of equal distribution and proportionality from Aristotle by Ricoeur; the demand of infinite responsibility and of ethical asymmetry in Derrida. We shall see that this choice of terminology is not anodyne.

Derrida's strategy can be understood better if one considers that justice defined as an infinite responsibility, as uncalculable, and unproportional, is really the condition for a "deconstruction" of justice defined as the search for equality, calculation, and the "right proportion." In the latter case, justice is assimilated to law. It is a system of rules that can be applied to particular situations (following the model of determinant judgment) in order to provide the "right proportion" (for example, between crime and punishment).[59] This is why, according to Derrida's central thesis, "deconstruction is justice." It involves "deconstructing" the law, to the extent that it was constructed historically through conventions, power relations, and founding acts of violence that have no legitimacy of their own. Here one can see the kinship between Derridean skepticism and that of Montaigne:

> Yet, the operation that amounts to founding, inaugurating, justifying law, to making law, could consist of a *coup de force*, of a performative and therefore interpretative violence that in itself is neither just nor unjust and that no justice and no earlier and previously founding law, no preexisting foundation, could, by definition, guarantee or contradict or invalidate.[60]

Given the fragility of the foundation of law, power bases its authority by recourse to "fictions." Whence comes the idea borrowed from Montaigne of a "mystical foundation of authority," in the sense that "the very emergence of justice and law, the instituting, founding, and justifying moment of law implies a performative force, that is to say always an interpretative force and a call to faith."[61] Through a critique of ideologies, whose premises can be detected in Pascal and Montaigne, Derridean "deconstruction" seeks to unmask the veils of power, the fabrications, and the justifications that pass for justice.

In what sense, though, does this ultimately very traditional critique of ideologies, revisited with the weapons of "deconstruction," have a relation with the question about what is just and unjust? In what way would the deconstruction of law, authority, and foundations be justice? This is where the detour through Levinas is justified insofar as justice is presented as an "unlimited responsibility." First of all, the deconstruction of the "mystical foundation of authority" is inscribed in the demand to remember and to be responsible for the other and for others without any limits, closure, or foundational authority (for example, the restrictive conditions placed on access to European citizenship in terms of the dominant standards: male, white, European, property owner). Second, the deconstruction of the law amounts to showing how the singularity of the other is always in a relation of inadequation to the general rule. Here Derrida intends more than equity in the Aristotelian sense (that is to say, a consideration of concrete situations in relation to an overly general and sometimes overly rigid rule)—namely, a "heteronomic relation to the other, to the face of the other that commands me, whose infinity I cannot thematize and whose hostage I am."[62] It is in the

name of this infinite demand and of this passage through the "incalculable" and "non-thematic" that justice can be had and that a deconstruction of law, as statutory and calculable, can take place.

At this stage, it is notable that the Derridean theory of justice retains an aporetic dimension, assumed by the author himself. In order for justice to be done, the "incalculable" must pass through discourse and action. It thus presupposes representation and comparison:

> Everything would still be simple if this distinction between justice and law were a true distinction, an opposition the function of which was logically regulated and masterable. But it turns out that law claims to exercise itself in the name of justice and that justice demands for itself that it be established in the name of a law that must be put to work (constituted and applied) by force "enforced."[63]

In fact, Derrida's argument itself seems to contain a tension. On the one side, a radical tendency of "deconstruction" commands a "destruction" of the law (in terms of its legitimacy and foundation) to the benefit of a theory of justice imbued with a Levinasian ethics that, when pushed to the extreme, makes a judicial discourse about the other impossible. This is the case when Derrida connects Levinasian justice to the Hebrew equivalent of "holiness." On the other side, a more moderate tendency of "deconstruction" leads to a "reconstruction" of the law in terms of an ideal of justice that is ultimately closer to Aristotelian equity, even though it is still nourished by the Levinasian ethical demand. In this case, it is not so much a question of mutually excluding law and justice as of trying to think them together:

> How to reconcile the act of justice that must always concern singularity, individuals, groups, irreplaceable existences, the other or myself *as* other, in a unique situation, with rules, norms, values or imperatives of justice that necessarily have a general form, even if this generality prescribes a singular application in each case? If I were content to apply a just rule, without a spirit

> of justice and without in some way each time inventing the rule and the example, I might be sheltered from criticism. Under the protection of law, my action would conform to objective law but I would not be just. I would be acting, Kant would say, *in conformity with* duty but not *out of duty* or *out of respect* for the law.[64]

This is why, according to Derrida, a just decision, instead of abolishing the law whose existence and necessity it presupposes, must not only reinvent the rule, and replay it in terms of each case, in terms of the singularity of the Other (with the risk of being a mechanical application of determinative judgment). In addition, before making a "just" decision, it must undergo the test of the "undecidable":

> The undecidable is not merely the oscillation or the tension between two decisions. Undecidable—this is the experience of that which, though foreign and heterogeneous to the order of the calculable and the rule, must nonetheless—it is of duty that one must speak—deliver itself over to the impossible decision while taking account of laws and rules. A decision that would not go through the test and ordeal of the undecidable would not be a free decision; it would only be the programmable application or the continuous unfolding of a calculable process. It might perhaps be legal; it would not be just.[65]

This more moderate path of "deconstruction" seems to converge with the Ricoeurian theory of justice (as developed by Ricoeur in his "little ethics"), in spite of differences in terminology. The Derridean distinction between law and justice corresponds with Ricoeur's dialectic of justice between ethics, morality, and practical wisdom. But, whereas Derrida does not see any justice as such in the law that calculates and proportions, Ricoeur discloses another ideal of justice from Aristotle to Rawls. This is the ethical ideal of equality and reciprocity. Instead of reducing the law to a mechanical set of rules, as judicial positivism would have it, Ricoeur is in favor of subordinating law to an ethics of the "good life." Notwithstand-

ing the acts of founding violence that Ricoeur readily acknowledges, the history of law and authority is not only governed by the "mystical," "conventions," and "power relations." It is also thought under the category of the "good":

> [T]he idea of justice is better named *sense* of justice on the fundamental level where we remain here. Sense of justice and of injustice, it would be better to say here, for what we are first aware of is injustice: "Unjust! What injustice!" we cry. And indeed it is in the mode of complaint that we penetrate the field of the just and the unjust . . . the sense of injustice is not simply more poignant but more perspicacious than the sense of justice, for justice more often is lacking and injustice prevails.[66]

It is this lack of justice that requires reparations and the reestablishment of a "just distance." For calculation and proportion are needed in order to mitigate the initial asymmetry. Contrary to the Derridean view, the ideals of reciprocity, proportionality, and equality are already an effort of justice that guides the law. It is clear, however, that the "sense of justice"—in its "ethical" or "teleological" dimension—is only a "moment," however essential it may be. It thus needs to be "put to the test" in relation to the criteria of universalization:

> We cannot do without a critical evaluation of our alleged sense of justice. The task would be to discern what components or what aspects of our considered convictions require a continual eradication of ideologically biased prejudices. This critical labor will have as its first field of application the prejudices that conceal themselves under what moral philosophers have called "specifying premises," for example, the restriction of the principle of justice that over the centuries allowed one to avoid classifying slaves as human beings.[67]

This is the reason for the recourse to procedural theories of justice, drawn in particular from Rawls. Their role, according to Ricoeur, is not to replace the "sense of justice" but to purify it and to

"test" it, even if it were only due to the equivocity of the notion of equality:

> If equality is the ethical mainspring of justice, how can one justify the fact that justice is split in half following two uses of equality: simple or arithmetic equality, where all shares are equal, and proportional equality, where equality is an equality of relations supposing four terms and not an equality of shares? Here again, the norm can decide, but at what cost? Will this not be, once again, to the benefit of a prudent calculation and at the expense of belonging?[68]

Calculation and comparison are justified here in the name of the search for justice. This is the case, for example, when individuals, as Rawls imagines them, are placed in the "original position." They elaborate principles of justice and define equality as it applies to fundamental liberties as well as to the economic and social domains.

The necessary detour through "the test of universality" for the sense of justice is not, however, the end point of Ricoeur's dialectic. This is because the principles of justice, like Kantian moral principles, have a high degree of generality. So it is necessary to know how to apply these universal principles to particular situations, singular individuals, and sociocultural contexts. This requires "practical wisdom." Here, Derrida's plea for increased consideration of singularities finds confirmation from Ricoeur himself. This is a matter of justifying, once again, the Aristotelian notion of equity when "the legislator has failed to foresee the case and has erred by oversimplifying." The same spirit of equity is required by Ricoeur, in the spirit of Rawls, when it comes to applying the general principles of justice to cultures that have not had the same historical development as the West or when it comes to applying a legal rule to particular cases.

To be sure, it is necessary to insist on the different inflections offered by Ricoeur and Derrida regarding the status of the rule. With Derrida, as we have seen, the rule must be reinvented each time. This pulls it away from its rigid character and its claim to

universality: "Each case is other, each decision is different, and requires an absolutely unique interpretation, which no existing, coded rule can or ought to guarantee absolutely."[69] With Ricoeur, "practical wisdom" does indeed consist of inventing the ways that best satisfy particular situations but it does so "by betraying the rule as little as possible." In both of these perspectives, the interpretive aspect of justice and the innovation of the decision are in the foreground, but the status of the rule in Ricoeur remains less flexible than in the Derridean perspective. The reason for this is tied to Ricoeur's attachment, in contrast with Derrida's mistrust, to the ideals of reciprocity and equality. They grant the status of general rules and the principles of justice.

Yet, it is important to recognize that Ricoeur himself accords a fundamental value to the ideal of justice defended by Derrida and Levinas. This does not occur in the sense of "practical wisdom," which still remains in the direct thread of a logic of reciprocity or equivalence (in spite of the attention granted to the singularity of the other), but in the sense of what Ricoeur calls love. Derrida calls justice what Ricoeur understands by love, except this concept does not belong to the logic of justice in the Ricoeurian sense. With love, another logic prevails. In contrast with the *logic of equivalence* (of proportion, equality, reciprocity, etc.) to which the Golden Rule in morality corresponds,[70] love follows the *logic of superabundance*. This logic surpasses the mere exchange of giving and receiving, once one is engaged in giving without expecting reciprocity in return. In speaking of love, Ricoeur does not have in mind the pure pathos of the love relationship; instead, he recognizes it as a part of the Judeo-Christian faith.

Although it is irreducible to what was, and remains, the religious virtue of charity, Ricoeur's logic of superabundance does not seek exile outside of legal justice. It is regulated by the principles of legitimate justice, beginning with those defined by Rawls. It is quite clear that love and justice belong to two different orders and two irreducible logics. This is the reason why Ricoeur defines love (or what he sometimes calls the economy of the gift) in supra-ethical, supra-political, and supra-legal terms. In spite of the "initial dispro-

portion between these two logics," Ricoeur leads them toward the logic of equivalence inherent in justice. And this is where his project meets up with that of Derrida. Love in Ricoeur's sense and justice in Derrida's sense both contradict the logic of equivalence, the proportionality of justice (in Ricoeur's sense) and of the law (in Derrida's sense). Left on its own, the logic of equivalence (which also governs the Golden Rule, Kant's imperatives, Aristotelian mutuality, and Rawlsian principles of justice) could translate into a subtle variety of utilitarianism (even the Rawlsian calculation of the maximin risks ultimately to become a tacit form of utilitarian calculus). And here one can find the shared desire of Ricoeur, Levinas, and Derrida to battle against all forms of "egology." This does not abolish the Golden Rule and its derivatives but saves its "purity":

> its secret kinship with the commandment to love, inasmuch as this latter is directed against the process of victimization that utilitarianism sanctions when it proposes as its ideal the maximization of the average advantage of the greatest number at the price of the sacrifice of a small number, a sinister implication that utilitarianism tries to conceal.[71]

The fact that the logic of superabundance must be led toward the logic of equivalence can easily be understood, if one considers the status granted by Ricoeur and Derrida to forgiveness. Forgiveness does not result from the judicial order of judgment, sanction, rehabilitation, and amnesty. If forgiveness is akin to a logic of superabundance, this is because it must pass the test of the unforgiveable—that is, the disproportion between "the depth of the fault and the height of forgiveness." This is why the two philosophers situate the *topos* of forgiveness under the sign of "the difficult" (Ricoeur) or "the impossible" (Derrida):

> Forgiveness neither is nor ought to be normal, normative, normalizing. It should remain exceptional and extraordinary, through the test of the impossible: as if it interrupted the ordinary flow of historical time.[72]

If there is a qualitative leap from "the difficult" to "the impossible" of forgiveness, Derrida tends to minimize the difference between these two qualifiers in the course of his discussion with Ricoeur:

> What difference is there, or occurs, between the "im-possible" (non-negative) and the "difficult," the very difficult, the most difficult possible, between difficulty and the *undoable*? What difference is there between what is radically difficult and what seems im-possible?[73]

These questions can be confirmed to the extent that forgiveness requires, according to Ricoeur, the same "disproportion." For it can only be carried out by the victim: "Not only can it not be expected, but such an expectation can be legitimately refused. To this extent, pardon must first have run into the unpardonable, that is, the infinite debt, the irreparable wrong."[74] The purpose of forgiveness, for Ricoeur, is not to wipe away memory but to remove a moral debt; it consists of "lifting the debt" but not "forgetting."[75] It is a question of recalling the past but without the "anger" that accompanies it. With the same requirements as Derrida, Ricoeur expresses a reservation about the extent of forgiveness, especially in the case of "immense crimes" whose imprescriptibility cannot be removed:

> To forgive would be to ratify impunity, which would be a grave injustice committed at the expense of the law and, even more so, of the victims. The confusion has, however, been encouraged by the fact that the enormity of the crimes breaks with the principle of proportion that governs the scale of crimes and misdemeanors and that of punishments. There is no appropriate punishment for a disproportionate crime. In this sense, such crimes are unpardonable.[76]

What is intended here are the "crimes against humanity" for which it is not possible to "remove the debt." Here one reaches the limit of forgiveness, superabundance, and love when "the horror of immense crimes prevents extending this consideration to their authors."[77] Under the conditions of the demands, which Ricoeur calls

"the Odyssey of the Spirit of Forgiveness," how could one still move back to the order of justice? Without coming from any political or judicial decision (unlike rehabilitation and amnesty) and belonging to a completely different logic, how could forgiveness be anything but a pious wish? Ricoeur rejoins again the Derridean project in the margins of Levinas. Although the *topos* of forgiveness is situated "above political authority and the "Nation-state," the philosophers call for indirect action on judicial logic. On this level, Ricoeur's injunction has never been closer to Derrida's:

> On the one hand, can we not take all the manifestations of compassion, of good will, at the very heart of the administration of justice, as the byproduct of forgiveness on justice, as if justice, touched by mercy, sought within its own sphere that extreme goal that ever since Aristotle we have called equity? . . . On the other hand, is it not up to forgiveness to accompany justice in its effort to eradicate the sacred element of justice on the symbolic level?[78]

In Ricoeur's approach, though, there is nothing that leads to the sacrifice of justice to the benefit of love. Unlike Levinas and Derrida who are focused solely on the impact of the logic of superabundance on the logic of equivalence, Ricoeur seeks to place them in a dialectic. On the one side, without the indirect impact of the logic of superabundance, the logic of equivalence could translate into "egoistic and interested calculation." On the other side, the logic of equivalence, governing the ideal of justice, allows for the "commandment to love" to be more viable, especially when it is pushed to the extreme of "loving one's enemies." Without a dose of reciprocity, the logic of superabundance would become incompatible with the principles of democracy and justice. It is once again the Kantian heritage that prevents Ricoeur from diluting the ideal of justice in the commandment to love, in light of the perverse results can be generated when a logic of superabundance is set up as a universal principle of action:

> Yet from what penal law and, in general, from what rule of justice can we deduce a maxim of action that would set up non-equivalence as a general rule? What distribution of tasks, roles, or advantages and obligations could be established, in the spirit of distributive justice, if the maxim of lending while expecting nothing in return were set up as a universal rule? If the hyper-moral is not to turn into the non-moral—not to say the immoral, for example, cowardice—it has to pass through the principle of morality, summed up in the golden rule and formalized by the rule of justice.[79]

Ultimately, it is the relation to modernity that is at stake in the ethico-political *différend* between Ricoeur and Derrida. This relationship is indeed critical for both the philosophers, inasmuch as they challenge the subject's claim to be a self-foundation. In this suspicion, one can recognize the indelible mark of Heidegger, who is the spearhead of antihumanist thought. One can also recognize their shared resistance against Hegelian totalization. But, whereas Derrida has a very strong mistrust, inspired both by Heidegger and Levinas, toward the ideals of modernity in its humanistic form, Ricoeur prefers to engage in a more dialectic approach. From the Derridean side, the autonomy of the subject is deconstructed at its roots, as a metaphysical fiction. From the Ricoeurian side, the subject is not a foundational moment but is not abolished, either. It is attained through an "apprenticeship of signs." Ricoeur's broken Hegelianism leads him in the direction of a Kantian horizon.

If Ricoeur refuses to leave the human subject in the abysses of post-modernity, this is clearly due to his desire to maintain a morality that is contained within the tradition of modernity, nourished by Kantian morality. Moral and legal responsibility could not be conceived without reference to a subject that, if not self-founded, is at least attested to. The same conviction animates Ricoeur when he justifies the demand for the equality and reciprocity of all humanity on the moral level and on the level of justice. It is true that Ricoeur's teachings were critical of formalism and the contractarianism that the Moderns made too rigid. But this critique is always placed with-

in a dialectic, whereas the Derridean strategy, which is more radical and corrosive, turns the aporia into the driving force of its philosophical investigation. That is to say that the "discourse of modernity" cannot escape the deconstruction of metaphysics, without entering into a dialectic. Derrida's "deconstruction" cannot be conveyed in terms of Heideggerian amoralism, considering the importance that he grants to the ethics of justice and to the Levinasian gesture of "infinite responsibility for the Other" (especially in his later writings). In a non-paradoxical way, Derridean deconstruction requires a more demanding and more radical ethics than one can find in the modern moralists. This is why "deconstructing" the law and morality in terms of the ideals of reciprocity and equality does not at all justify "the law of the strongest." Instead, it seeks to require even more responsibility for the other. Derridean postmodernism pushes some aspects of the modern philosophical project to their most radical degree, by extending the sphere of emancipation and of responsibility to beings who have been excluded from it. One can better appreciate why Derridean philosophy receives so many favorable responses from ethnic minorities and marginalized communities.

This plea in favor of responsibility for the other can also be found in Ricoeur. It is the figure of Levinas who provides the place of mediation between the two philosophers. Levinas allowed both of them to take a greater distance from the impasses of Heideggerian "de-moralization" and to hear "the voice of the Other." Ricoeur's ethico-political philosophy is different, however, in that the demand for responsibility and for love of the other must itself be placed in tension with the modern ideals of reciprocity, autonomy, and justice. This is also the reason why Ricoeur's project cannot be fully situated in the path of post-structuralism, if the latter is synonymous with anti-modernity or post-modernity. The originality of Ricoeur's approach consists precisely in rethinking modernity in terms of both post-structuralist subversion and the wisdom of the Ancients. This is because, for him, the Enlightenment does not introduce a radical rupture but extends the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions of justice and emancipation in an innovative way. As such, it already

anticipates the postmodern claims. Ricoeur's hermeneutics seeks to provide a mediation between tradition, modernity, and post-modernity. And this is why this hermeneutics can enter into dialogue with, but not fuse with, Derridean deconstruction.[80]

NOTES

1. Translator's note: here the implicit reference is to the title of an article by Derrida. The term "*réserves*" in French can mean either "reservations" or "excess." Thus, to speak of "Hegelianism with reserves" carries the dual connotation of having reservations about Hegel as well as having something more than Hegel. My translation seeks to retain that duality.

2. In the academic context of the time, "assistants" enjoyed greater liberty with respect to professors than today.

3. Jacques Derrida, "La parole: Donner, nommer, appeler," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur* (Paris: Éditions de l'Herne, 2004), 21.

4. François Dosse, *Les sens d'une vie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), 225–26.

5. On the shared influences on Ricoeur and Derrida, see the work by Eftichis Pirovolakis, *Reading Derrida and Ricoeur: Improbable Encounters between Deconstruction and Hermeneutics* (New York: SUNY Press, 2010), 5–7. That work is the most complete study to date on Ricoeur and Derrida.

6. In the course of the conversations that he had, Dosse highlights the tugging of young researchers between intellectual attraction toward Derrida or Ricoeur, in spite of the differences between their university statuses at the time. This is true, for example, of Françoise Dastur and Vincent Descombes but also of Jean-Luc Nancy. They were all involved in research work under the direction of Ricoeur. Descombes recognizes, however, that it is not so much due to a proximity with Ricoeurian hermeneutics that he worked with him but that Ricoeur accepted to direct iconoclastic studies such as the one on Lévi-Strauss (see Dosse, *Les sens d'une vie*, 433–34).

7. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 3*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 204.

8. More precisely, it is "the desire of desire" that fuels the motor of Hegelian dialectic. It is not the "immediate desire" that ends in the desired

object but the "desire of the desire" of another consciousness that is manifested for Hegel in the "struggle for recognition." On this point, see *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, 143–76, as well as the commentary by Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980).

9. Jean Nabert, *Elements for an Ethics*, trans. William Petreik (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969).

10. Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans.Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 459.

11. Ibid., 463.

12. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 3*, 206.

13. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, 472.

14. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 3*, 204–5.

15. Jacques Derrida, "The Violence of the Letter: From Levi-Strauss to Rousseau," in *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 101–40.

16. Jacques Derrida, "Freud and the Scene of Writing," in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 196–231.

17. Paul Ricoeur, "Entretiens de Paul Ricoeur avec Carlos Oliveira," in *Temps et récit de Paul Ricoeur en débat*, ed. C. Bouchindhomme and R. Rochlitz (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 30.

18. Ibid., 31.

19. Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 207–72.

20. On the shared Heideggerian influence on Ricoeur and Derrida and on its influence on their post-structuralism, see Oana Godeneau, "Retrospective sur le structuralisme," *Euresis* 1–2 (1996): 43–53.

21. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, tr. Robert Czerny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

22. The most comprehensive study of the Ricoeur-Derrida debate over the status of metaphor is the one by Jean-Luc Amalric, *Ricoeur et Derrida: Les enjeux de la métaphore* (Paris: PUF, 2006). One of the originalities of Amalric's thesis is to decrease the antagonism between the two philosophers by showing how the concept of "metaphorical truth" ensures the viability of the deconstructionist project. Nadine Charbonnel, "Dérives philosophiques de la théorie de la métaphore: Ricoeur et Derrida sur de mauvais radeaux," in *Dérives de la métaphore*, ed. D. Jamet (Paris:

L'Harmattan, 2009), 211–26, contests this thesis by showing that Ricoeur and Derrida fall into an ontological aporia in virtue of their pan-linguism. The former is prisoner of the Christian "Word," while the latter is prisoner of the pagan "Word." This objection seems suspect, though, to the extent that Ricoeur himself, through metaphor, seeks to show that this trope intends something about being as an "oblique" relationship.

23. This debate between Ricoeur and Derrida initially took place at the University of Montreal during the Congress of the Association of the Societies of Philosophy in the French Language in 1971. See Paul Ricoeur, "Discours et communication," *La Communication* (1973): 23–48; Derrida, "Signature, Event, Context," in *Margins of Philosophy*, 307–30.

24. See the excellent essay by M. Foessel, "La lisibilité du monde: La véhémence phénoménologique de Paul Ricoeur," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur*, 168–78.

25. On this expression, which is essential to understanding Ricoeur's hermeneutics, see the work of Bernard Stevens, *L'apprentissage des signes* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991).

26. Paul Ricoeur, "Existence and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 10.

27. Ibid., 11.

28. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

29. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 213.

30. For Kant, respect is first considered from the angle of the first categorical imperative (it involves respect for the moral law). It will be reformulated in the second imperative in which it will take into account the "plurality" of persons (it involves respect for the other as an end in itself).

31. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 214.

32. Here it is necessary to insist on the fidelity of Ricoeur's reading of Kant to the reading begun by Heidegger. See Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Main Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997). From the point of view of the foundation of the subject, the hermeneutic problem raised by Heidegger bears on the reconciliation between *The Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. In the "first critique," Heidegger does not have any difficulty in finding the "finitude of the theoretical subject," which is in-

trinsic to the activity of knowing. Whereas a "divine intuition" that would be able to grasp the being of things, according to Kant, human understanding can only know them in a derivative way, that is to say, on the basis of a prior "givenness" and through the intermediary of sensibility. Does this orientation also hold from the point of view of practical reason? One can rightly imagine that Kant, leaving the theoretical subject partly disarmed, devotes all his efforts to consolidating the self-positing of the practical subject. Moral autonomy, as Kant posits, does not have to follow from an empirical given. Heidegger, in his patient reading, refers to a radical finitude at work analogously within practical reason. Just as receptivity occurs on the theoretical level through the role played by the schematism, it occurs likewise on the practical level through the role played by the pure feeling of respect: "If finite reason is receptive in its own spontaneity and as such derives from the transcendental imagination, practical reason is necessarily based on the latter as well" (213). On the exegetical debates between Heidegger and the neo-Kantians, see *Kant and the Main Problem of Metaphysics*. A condensation of this debate can be found in Alain Renaut, *The Era of the Individual*, trans. M. B. Debevoise (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

33. Anne-Marie Roviello, "L'horizon kantien," *Esprit* 7–8 (1988): 152–62.

34. Ibid., 158.

35. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: SUNY, 2010).

36. Ibid., 283.

37. Ibid., 265.

38. Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," in *Writing and Difference*, 138.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. See Martin Heidegger, *Essais et conférences*, trans. A. Preau (Paris: Gallimard, 1958).

43. Ricoeur, "Entretiens de Paul Ricoeur avec Carlos Oliveira," in *Temps et récit de Paul Ricoeur en débat*, 35.

44. Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being: Or beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1981), 117.

45. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 355.

46. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 339.

47. Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," in *Writing and Difference*, 130 (translation modified).

48. Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," in *Writing and Difference*, 125 (translation modified).

49. This talk was published under the title "Otherwise: A Reading of Emmanuel Levinas's *Otherwise than Being: Or beyond Essence*," *Yale French Studies* 104 (2004): 82–99.

50. Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 155.

51. Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 128.

52. Ricoeur, "Otherwise," 94.

53. Ricoeur, "Otherwise," 96.

54. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 195.

55. Ibid., 194.

56. See, in particular, *Specters of Marx*, tr. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994); *The Politics of Friendship*, tr. George Collins (New York: Verso, 1997); and Jacques Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (London: Routledge, 2002), 235. This analysis will rely especially on the latter work.

57. It is for this reason that he considers it good to temper this apparent rupture: "There are no doubt many reasons why the majority of texts hastily identified as 'deconstructionist' seem—I do say *seem*—not to foreground the theme of justice (as theme, precisely), nor even the theme of ethics or politics. Naturally this is only *apparently so*, if one considers, *for example* (I will only mention these) the many texts devoted to Levinas and to the relations between 'violence and metaphysics,' or to the philosophy of right, that of Hegel's, with all its posterity in *Glas*, of which it is the principal motif, or the texts devoted to the drive for power and to the paradoxes of power in 'To Speculate—on Freud,' to the law [*loi*], in 'Before the Law' (on Kafka's *Vor dem Gesetz*) or in 'Declarations of Independence,' in "The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, in Admiration," and in many other texts" (Derrida, "Force of Law," 235). In spite of the undeniable presence of the theme of justice in these writings, it seems to us that the tone is no longer the same. This will be confirmed with regard to the Derridean recovery of Levinas.

58. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 89 and 82.

59. To be clear, we will use the term "law" (*droit*) henceforth to account for this sense of justice.

60. Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, 241.

61. Ibid.

62. Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, 245.

63. Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, 250–51.

64. Ibid., 245 (translation modified).

65. Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, 252.

66. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 198.

67. Paul Ricoeur, "Is a Purely Procedural Theory of Justice Possible?" in *The Just*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 56–57.

68. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 228.

69. Derrida, "The Force of Law," in *Acts of Religion*, 251.

70. "That the Golden Rule does stem from a logic of equivalence is indicated by the reciprocity, or the reversibility, that this rule establishes between what one person does and what is done to the other, between acting and being acted upon—hence by implication between the agent and the patient, who, although irreplaceable, are proclaimed as being able to substitute for each other." See Paul Ricoeur, "Love and Justice" in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, ed. Mark I. Wallace, trans. David Pellauer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 326.

71. Ibid., 62.

72. Jacques Derrida, "Le siècle et le pardon," *Le Monde des débats* (December 1999).

73. Derrida, "La parole: Donner, nommer, appeler," in *Cahiers de L'Herne Ricoeur*, 20.

74. Ricoeur, "Sanction, Rehabilitation, Pardon," in *The Just*, 144.

75. Olivier Abel, *Le pardon: Briser la dette et l'oubli* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 1991).

76. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 473.

77. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 474.

78. Ricoeur, "Sanction, Rehabilitation, Pardon," in *The Just*, 145.

79. Ricoeur, "Love and Justice," in *Figuring the Sacred*, 327–28.

80. Here we rejoin, on the ethico-political level, the thesis defended by Jean-Luc Amalric on the level of the theory of tropes in his book, *Ricoeur et Derrida: Les enjeux de la métaphore*.

3

OUTSIDE THE SUBJECT AND BECOMING A SUBJECT

For readers familiar with Ricoeur's works, plunging into *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* may provoke a certain philosophical disorientation, if not a radical state of bewilderment.[1] In these works, readers will not find a dialectic or a set of proofs developed sequentially through chapters, nor do they find canonical concepts inherited from the philosophical tradition. These works cannot be connected to any established philosophical "genre": there is no Platonic dialogue, Cartesian method, Spinozist geometry, or Nietzschean aphorism to be found, nor is there any analytic logic or phenomenological description. Instead, they use strange concepts that come straight out of science fiction; they borrow concepts from limit experiences in literature (such as the body without organs or the "*cri-souffle*" from Artaud); they take scientific concepts out of their initial sense (the molecular, rhizomes, etc.); and they even invent concepts for this occasion (such as schizoanalysis, desiring machines, intense becoming, etc.). There are sentences without verbs. Profuse incantations, disturbing logorrhea, and slogan words take the place of the usual basis of argumentation. Scholastic philosophy would only see it as sheer lunacy in which *Logos* has lost its legitimate place.

Here we are at the opposite end of the spectrum from dialectic and Ricoeurian pedagogy, which require the reader to take the long, patient detour through mediations and to reappropriate the whole interpretive tradition, before cautiously adding a few stones to the edifice of philosophy. With Ricoeur, it is often only at the end of the course that the reader can expect a hint of intellectual enjoyment, by being able to recover the prior reflective moments retrospectively in thought. Like Derrida, but differently, Ricoeur handles the *libido sciendi* through the art of differing, even if it leaves the reader faced with a tenacious aporia in the end. Though broken, Ricoeur's dialectic still has a Hegelian inspiration. The economy of *libido sciendi* is completely different in *Anti-Oedipus*, and even more so in *A Thousand Plateaus* where flashes of insight and jarring shortcuts can appear at any moment of the text and literally subjugate the reader. The dialectic art and the aporetics of differing are absent from a philosophical economy whose exposition of concepts has neither a beginning nor an end, like the "thousand plateaus" that are not chapters but zones of rhizomatic connection. *A Thousand Plateaus* can be started at the middle of the work; it does not offer a proof to us but an injunction to experiment and to desire.

To be sure, *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* are not all of the work published by Gilles Deleuze, and they clearly contrast with numerous works in which he is a historian of philosophy, though an iconoclastic one who seeks, as he says, "to make babies in the back of his teachers"—this is especially so with Nietzsche and Spinoza but even the case with Bergson, Hume, and Kant. The contrast is equally sharp with Deleuze's works that belong to a more canonical and demonstrative genre, even though he conceives the philosophical project in a radically new way, as in *Difference and Repetition*.[2] Of course, *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* were not conceived or written by Deleuze alone but with the conceptual assistance of Félix Guattari, who was initially a psychoanalyst before becoming a schizoanalyst, was trained by Lacan and was a practitioner to the end of his life at the La Borde experimental clinic.

Though taking a few short excursions into Deleuze's other works, we will focus primarily on the two volumes of *Capitalism*

and Schizophrenia, especially *A Thousand Plateaus*. This is the wager risked by this chapter. It is not that we want to account for all of Deleuze's thought, which is also that of Guattari, by reading this work alone. There are clear limits to this investigation. We are simply seeking to discover certain Ricoeurian concepts in this work that seem quite distant from the inspiration and philosophical approach of our author. There is indeed a large abyss between Ricoeur and Deleuze, and we will not try to bridge it in an artificial way. To this, we can add the risk that faces any attempt to confront two philosophers—that is, of putting two authors into dialogue when they do not have much to say to each other. It is, in fact, true that Ricoeur and Deleuze, unlike Ricoeur and Derrida, never engaged in a direct or indirect dialogue, not even a conflictual one through their written works.

It would be false, though, to claim that the two philosophers completely ignored each other over the course of their intellectual itinerary. Ricoeur the phenomenologist, the Husserl specialist, and even more Ricoeur the reader of Freud, is sometimes cited in Deleuze and Guattari's texts.[3] The Ricoeurian concepts of the "aborted cogito" and the "split cogito" are cited in *Difference and Repetition*.[4] But these few influences are not of the sort, far from it, that would turn Ricoeur into a key interlocutor of Deleuze or Deleuze-Guattari. Conversely, only three works by Deleuze as a historian of philosophy and as a philosopher of literature drew Ricoeur's attention: *Proust and Signs*,[5] when Ricoeur tries to think the reconfiguration of time by the fictive narrative [6] ; *Bergsonism*[7] when Ricoeur reinterprets the problem of the persistence of the trace[8] in Bergson's *Matter and Memory*; Ricoeur pays homage to Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*[9] in order to think with the "philosopher with a hammer" about active forgetfulness as a remedy for the spirit of revenge.[10] Considering these borrowings and direct encounters, one still has to acknowledge that Deleuze's philosophy remains very marginal in Ricoeur's work. Here is the remarkable fact: the works coauthored with Guattari post-1968 are never mentioned by him. There is thus no reference to the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.[11]

It seems surprising to us, then, that in an excerpt of a conversation in 2003[12] Ricoeur mentions Deleuze and Foucault as "the two thinkers" whom he "most admired."[13] Beyond this rhetorical formulation in the context of a conversation, it is surprising to find Deleuze and Foucault placed on such a pedestal, considering again their relative marginality in the body of Ricoeur's work. To be sure, there are thinkers who operate in an underground way without being the object of any systematic treatment. This is the case with Nietzsche and Heidegger in Foucault's thought. Indeed, one can also admire works that are quite dissimilar and heterogeneous to those that one can produce oneself. But this is the first time, to my knowledge, that Ricoeur pays such homage to Deleuze and Foucault, whereas the names of Husserl, Jaspers, Marcel, Levinas, Nabert, to name only a few, stand on the center stage of Ricoeur's intellectual debts. It is not by chance that the few comparative studies on Ricoeur and Deleuze, including the pioneering article by Olivier Mongin[14] or the work by the Irish philosopher Declan Sheerin,[15] are also surprised by this late homage.

Ricoeur and Deleuze, though they have different institutional and intellectual positions, are at the heart of the "philosophical moment of the 1960s,"[16] where structuralism and psychoanalysis especially are under debate. And the smallest common denominator that—though it alone could not explain Ricoeur's late homage to Deleuze, could at least justify the pertinence of a confrontation between the two philosophers—is situated precisely in their adoption of a post-structuralist stance. Neither of the two philosophers ever claimed to belong to post-structuralism in the rigorous sense defined at the outset of this study: as the passage through structuralism (and not the rejection of it) coupled with an attempt to surpass it. Everything depends, however, on the path that is privileged for going beyond structuralism: Ricoeur's post-structuralist hermeneutics is not the path opened by Deleuze with (or without) Guattari. The lines of separation still remain to be determined, and without them, so do the areas of intersection between these two figures of French post-structuralism. In this study, we will recall three areas of intersection: the status of the event through their critical analysis of structural

linguistics; the dialectic of force and meaning through their readings of Freudian psychoanalysis; and the place of desire and the law through their reappropriation of Spinozistic and Nietzschean ethics.

STRUCTURE, PLOT, AND EVENT

If one had to bring out a first area of intersection in the debate that Ricoeur, Deleuze, and Guattari had with and against structuralism, it would reside in their shared desire to escape from the closure of the system of signs. This is not to deny the existence of "structures" (linguistic, symbolic, social, economic, etc.), nor is it to deny the pertinence of structuralist tools. Instead, the point is to accord a decisive importance to what exceeds the self-closure of structures. In the preceding chapters, we have already insisted on the path opened up by Ricoeur, which consists of being attentive to the ultimate purpose of language: to say something about something. This is why hermeneutics grants so much importance to the word. From the side of the systems of signs, the word has to do with a semiotics and from the side of events, the word has to do with a speaker's use of it in a sentence to say something in a situation:

> Thus the word is, as it were, a trader between the system and the act, between the structure and the event. On the one hand, it relates to structure, as a differential value, but it is then only a semantic potentiality; on the other hand, it relates to the act and to the event in the fact that its semantic actuality is contemporaneous with the ephemeral actuality of the utterance.[17]

Used in a sentence in the course of the event of living speech, the word acquires new meanings that contribute to giving a history to language. This is the same process that Ricoeur analyzes for longer sequences of sentences, such as texts. Their sense is freed from internal closure through the act of reading, which serves to better reconfigure reality and the world of the reader. Deleuze and Guattari

also stand opposed to a linguistics that "closes language in on itself"[18] but for a reason that is less hermeneutic than pragmatic:

> As Volosinov [Bakhtin] says, as long as linguistics extracts constants, it is incapable of helping us understand how a single word can be a complete enunciation.[19]

Deleuze and Guattari prefer to see language as a form of agency that is always in connection with other nonlinguistic functions. The system of signs is never organized on its own; agency is always twofold (the agency of the body and agency of statements):

> A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages.[20]

The semiotic model of a structuralist kind is too close to the model of the "tree," with roots, foundations, laws, and a unified system. The pragmatics of agency is akin to the model of the "rhizome" in which each point can be connected to another point without a unity, foundation, or closure. This is not to deny the existence of "structures" ("it is always possible to break a language down into internal structural elements"[21]), dominant languages, and reifications of power, instead the intention is to show how rhizomatic types of agency are invested in these structures.

It is clear that the same post-structuralist ambition to escape the closure of the system and to move toward being animates Ricoeur as well as Deleuze and Guattari. But one quickly feels that one is not within the same philosophical world. While the "ontological vehemence" of language leads Ricoeur to rethink the possibilities offered by metaphor to express being otherwise, Deleuze with Guattari seek, as Declan Sheerin says, "to kill metaphor."[22] It would be a mistake, for reasons already mentioned, to assimilate Ricoeur's post-structuralist hermeneutics with the Deleuzian model of the "tree," but it cannot be linked to the model of the "rhizome" either.

For Ricoeur, Unity, Foundation, System, and Closure are indeed broken just as much as the *cogito* that he seeks to reconceptualize, but this fundamental break does not leave room for the organization of multiplicities without object or subject, without beginning or end, and without inside or outside.

The same comments also hold for their respective philosophies of the event. While structuralism grants a priority to synchrony over diachrony and considers the event as a mere change of the state of a system, both Deleuze and Ricoeur sought to assign the event a more noble status. The abyss between these two conceptions of the event opens up, however, when Ricoeur tries to give it a narrative outcome. On his view, the event can only make sense when it is arranged in a narrative. If the event comes from the side of the heterogeneous, it is through the configuration of a plot, in the sense of an Aristotelian *muthos*, that it can be deployed. The event, in turn, gives movement to the plot *a fortiori*, when it reveals a "reversal of fortune." The same intention guides Ricoeur's contrast between the hermeneutic model of the "Judeo-Christian kerygma" and the Lévi-Straussian structural-totemic model in which synchrony prevails over diachrony. The kerygmatic model joins together three histories in which the event is bound up with narrative interpretation: "the historicity of the founding events—or *hidden time*, after the historicity of the living interpretation of sacred writers—which constitutes *tradition*, we now have the historicity of understanding, *the historicity of hermeneutics*."[23]

If Deleuze's philosophy of the event (prior to his encounter with Guattari) also seeks to escape from structuralist synchrony, it takes a radically different turn from the one proposed by Ricoeur. This is because there is a principle of order and synthesis in the narrative philosophy of the event, even if it is a synthesis of the heterogeneous. It seeks to bring the event into an intelligible whole, that is to say, it follows the model of the "tree." For Deleuze, to reason in this way is to miss events that result fundamentally from the nonnarrative, the non-figurative, even if they do not escape language (but belong instead to a nonnarrative language). Olivier Mongin rightly perceived here the dividing line between the two philosophers:

> Ricoeur responds to the question of time by highlighting the role of narration and configuration, whereas Deleuze conceives time against narration, the pure time of the configurable and of de-configuration (figure and face can form a pair) against "configuration" understood in the Ricoeurian sense.[24]

It is in *The Logic of Sense* that Deleuze paves the way for a thought of the event that owes much to the Stoic theory of "incorporeal" entities, where the event is regarded as an "extra-being" produced by the "mixture of bodies." Events are not things or beings, instead they result from the impact and encounter of beings. Their pure emergence cannot be traced back to an *arche*; their encounter cannot be reduced to *Chronos*. Unlike the things that exist in the living present, the event is "the unlimited *Aion*, the becoming which divides itself infinitely in past and future and always eludes the present."[25] Whence the difficulty of grasping the event, of "being worthy of the event," as Deleuze says. The rehabilitation of the event thus passes along opposite paths in Ricoeur and Deleuze. It is a pure non-corporeal becoming for the author of *The Logic of Sense*, whereas it is emplotment for the author of *Time and Narrative*. The mark of *Chronos* still remains imprinted on the narrated event whose sense unfolds thanks to the *muthos*, whereas the *Aion* leads to a philosophy of non-sense:

> The noise of the depths was an infra-sense, an under-sense, *Untersinn*; the voice from the heights was a pre-sense. One could now come to believe, with the organization of the surface, that nonsense has reached that point at which it becomes sense, or takes on sense. . . . In us, though, the advice and the rule of method resound: do not hasten to eliminate nonsense and to give it a sense. Nonsense would keep its secret of the real manner by which it creates sense. The organization of the physical surface is not yet sense; it is, or rather will be, a co-sense.[26]

FORCE, SENSE, AND DESIRE

From the event to sense or infra-sense, we are now passing to a second zone of intersection between the paths opened up by the post-structuralism of Ricoeur and Deleuze. This second zone requires an introduction at the same time of the Freudian psychoanalysis with which the two philosophers have had a brush up. This is not the place to deepen the Lacanian's violent reception of *Freud and Philosophy* or the charges that Deleuze and Guattari bring against the founders of psychoanalysis in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, Lacan being perhaps the one who is spared the most from them.[27] Instead, let's pay closer attention, first of all, to how the dialectic plays out, if there is one, between force, sense, and desire through the reading of Freud that is proposed by Ricoeur, Deleuze, and Guattari.

The epistemological problem, as Ricoeur presents it in *Freud and Philosophy*, consists of asking whether the discourse of psychoanalysis speaks about conflicts of forces that are justified by an "energetics" or an "economics" (of the investment and counterinvestment of drives) or whether it speaks about relations of sense that are justified by a hermeneutics. This problem can be expressed in the following form:

> [T]here seems to be an antinomy between an explanation governed by the principles of the metapsychology and an interpretation that necessarily moves among meanings and not among forces, among representations or ideas and not among instincts.[28]

The interest in Ricoeur's reading of Freud is to establish periods in his work by showing that, up to the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freudian discourse belonged to an energetics of a neurological kind that was untethered from any hermeneutic anchoring. While *The Interpretation of Dreams* is a pivotal moment, it is especially in the essays gathered together in the "Papers on Metapsychology" that Ricoeur finds a mixed discourse in Freudian

psychoanalysis that allows for a better articulation of energetics and hermeneutics. Here it does not matter whether Ricoeur's reading of Freud's work is accurate; the essential point is how the fate of Ricoeur's hermeneutics is sealed. It owes as much, if not more, to Freud as to the German tradition from Schleiermacher to Gadamer, which passes though Dilthey and Heidegger.[29] Against the positivist anchoring of psychoanalysis that assimilates it with experimental psychology, Ricoeur turns the unconscious into a problem deriving from a theory of interpretation, as if it were a matter of deciphering the symbols produced by the unconscious like a text, with its obscurity, equivocity, and plurivocity. More precisely, for Ricoeur psychoanalysis becomes a "region" of hermeneutics, understood as a science of the interpretation of symbols in a dual sense: of a direct, literal, and primary sense that designates by excess another indirect, secondary, and figurative sense that can only be grasped through the former.

Whereas Ricoeur places psychoanalytic discourse on the lap of hermeneutics, Deleuze and Guattari seek at all costs to escape from it. The authors of *A Thousand Plateaus* praise Freud for having discovered unconscious machines, "desiring-productions," but they denounce him afterward for having reduced these productions to a reductive and unfortunate interpretation.[30] To be sure, prior to his encounter with Guattari, Deleuze's relation to Freud was not so impetuous, especially if one refers to *The Logic of Sense.* There he leaves room, to a certain extent, for a theory of the interpretation of the unconscious that does not derive strictly from a rigorous hermeneutic method. *The Logic of Sense* still seeks to complicate the Freudian topology: the Deleuzian triptych of "depth-surface-height" is still a form of topology that recalls, without being identical to it, the second Freudian topology of the "id-ego-superego."[31]

With the appearance of the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, it is no longer a question of complicating Freudian (or Kleinian) psychoanalysis but of getting rid of it altogether. On an initial reading, one might be tempted to say that Deleuze and Guattari provide a defense of a pure energetics that is irreducible to any hermeneutics. This would be diametrically opposed to Ri-

coeur's enterprise. The lexical field covered by *Anti-Oedipus* or *A Thousand Plateaus* abounds with concepts (that do not seek to be metaphors) in which the language of force prevails, for example, desiring machines, intense becomings, bodies without organs, fields of force, intensive vibrations, and molecular processes. Yet, it would be imprecise to reduce this language of force to a complete biologization of unconscious productions, even if the unconscious is undeniably sexualized through a radical materialism. The aim of the recourse to these new concepts is to explode the Freudian interpretation of unconscious productions. This system considers the unconscious as a theatric representation. A family drama unfolds in which the self plays, for bad rather than good, a role that has not been chosen. The Oedipal drama and the familial hermeneutics underlying it fail to see the unconscious as a "machine" and a "factory":

> A classical theater was substituted for the unconscious as a factory; representation was substituted for the units of production of the unconscious; and an unconscious that was capable of nothing but expressing itself—in myth, tragedy, dreams—was substituted for the productive unconscious.[32]

From a Deleuzian point of view, Ricoeur still remains within the snares of Ancient drama and Oedipal tragedy, even though he seeks to enrich the archeology of sense in Freudian psychoanalysis with a teleology of sense inspired by Hegelian phenomenology. Even with the resources of hermeneutics, Ricoeur remains squarely within the field of psychoanalysis. By contrast, Deleuze and Guattari seek to leave it plain and simple. From a Ricoeurian point of view, Deleuze and Guattari remain solely in the register of force, which reduces the science of unconscious productions to natural science and thereby loses sight of the uniqueness of the symbolic dimension of the unconscious.

A deeper reading, however, could justify the view that interpretation still remains present in this new model of investigation that Deleuze and Guattari call schizoanalysis. They are battling against the reduction of the sense of unconscious productions to Oedipal

statements. They do not deny the existence of such statements, especially in the case of neuroses, but they do strongly reject the reduction of all unconscious productions, especially psychotic ones, to such statements. This is the case in Freud's famous analysis of the Wolf-Man:

> The trap was set from the start: never will the Wolf-Man speak. Talk as he might about wolves, howl as he might like a wolf, Freud does not even listen; he glances at his dog and answers, "It's daddy." For as long as that lasts, Freud calls it neurosis; when it cracks, it's psychosis.[33]

This example is the archetype of what they denounce in how interpretation is used in the field of psychoanalysis, to the point of becoming a veritable *doxa*: the stranglehold of a dogmatic signifier called Oedipal or castration.

But could it not also be said, to the contrary, that Deleuze and Guattari do seek to provide new interpretations that open the field to schizoanalysis? For their use of the language of force is precisely a language that seeks to say something about unconscious productions. If indeed there is interpretation, it is not the kind introduced by Ricoeur for symbols that have a dual meaning. In that respect, schizoanalysis is not a hermeneutics. Yet, it cannot escape from the question of interpretation, that is to say, from multiple meanings. Instead of deciphering a latent sense through a manifest sense, schizoanalysis remains on the surface of sense. That is to say that it takes the literal expressions of the unconscious seriously. To recall the example above, taking the Wolf-Man seriously is to say that he is really fascinated by wolves. This fascination does not hide the Father or Castration, instead there is a mode of desire and of becoming schizo that can pass through the packs of wolves, just as it can pass through other types of becoming (intense, imperceptible, etc.). And that is where Deleuze and Guattari do indeed provide an interpretation, albeit a radically different one from Freudian interpretation:

> It is not a question of representation: don't think for a minute that it has to do with believing oneself a wolf, representing oneself as a wolf. The wolf, wolves, are intensities, speeds, temperatures, nondecomposable variable distances. A swarming, a wolfing.[34]

Deleuze and Guattari's direct and virulent opposition to Freudian *doxa* is not only a question about how to interpret the products of the unconscious or concerning the nature of the unconscious as it pertains to questions of the subject. Through the cure, Freud seeks to construct a subject that is more lucid and transparent about itself, a subject that is also better able to handle its mental and instinctual conflicts. Whereas Freud seeks to arrive at the "I where the 'it' was," Deleuze and Guattari want to be done with the subject. The mistake has often been made of reading *A Thousand Plateaus* as a defense of madness, drugs, or self-destruction. Deleuze and Guattari continually are on guard against the dangers of the cancerous, fascist, drugged, crazed "body without organs." There is a call for prudence throughout the book, which sometimes leads Deleuzian-Guattarian experimentation toward Stoic austerity: "healing oneself with pure waters." But there is an undeniable invitation, sometimes even an injunction, to escape from the metaphysical or idealist subject inherited from Cartesianism as well as the Freudian becoming of the subject. What resurfaces here is a totally de-centered conception of something that can no longer be called a subject (even in the form of a subjectification); instead, it is the rhizome that we must always become. Whence comes the fascination of Deleuze and Guattari with limit-experiences, especially in literature, such as the "*cri-souffles*" of Antonin Artaud:

> Let us consider the three great strata concerning us, in other words, the ones that most directly bind us: the organism, significance, and subjectification. The surface of the organism, the angle of significance and of interpretation, and the point of subjectification or subjection. You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a signifier and signified, interpreter and

> interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp.[35]

Instead of freeing us from these chains, psychoanalysis contributes to tightening them even more. Schizoanalysis is not only an interpretation of desiring forms, even though the authors refuse to indulge in all forms of interpretation. It is presented correlatively as a dramatic alternative and a liberatory therapeutics that calls for experimentation with the body without organs (in the sense of a disorganized and de-subjectified body) in which intensities, desires, and becomings other than the Subject circulate.

By measuring the abyss that separates psychoanalysis from schizoanalysis, one can at the same time determine the gulf that separates Ricoeur from Deleuze and Guattari. For Ricoeur, in spite of the originality of his theory of the subject, remains very Freudian in a sense. As much as the Ricoeurian becoming-subject can be connected, to a certain degree, with other variants of French post-structuralism—Bourdieusian anamnesis, the Foucaultian care for the self, Castoriadis's autonomy—Ricoeur remains quite distant from Deleuze and Guattari. Indeed, as Declan Sheerin emphasizes, Ricoeur and Deleuze "argue for a non-identity in man, a fracture or *fêlure* in the soul."[36] But Deleuze's adoption of Ricoeur's "fractured" and "aborted" *cogito* can be misleading. Ultimately, they do not intend the same thing by these terms. For Ricoeur, the decentered subject is a point of departure, whereas it is a destination for Deleuze and Guattari. From their point of view, there is always too much of the "subject" in the sense of the "strata that bind us" mentioned above. Their goal is to shatter it into a thousand intensities. From the Ricoeurian point of view, it is indeed necessary to be liberated from false consciousness, from the false-subject that considers itself to be the master of meaning, but the goal is to recover a subject that is more free and more self-transparent. This is the reason why Ricoeur is able to adopt the famous adage of Freud: "there where 'it' was, there will 'I' be." This is also the reason why, just as he did with hermeneutics, Ricoeur can hope to return psychoanaly-

sis back to the core of reflexive philosophy, though less in a Cartesian than in a Spinozistic or Nabertian way. Here a direct relation is established between hermeneutics and reflexive philosophy: the interpretation of symbols with dual meanings is conceived as a reflexive self-achievement of the subject through a position of distraction and decentering:

> Reflection must become interpretation because I cannot grasp the act of existing except in signs scattered in the world. That is why a reflective philosophy must include the results, methods, and presuppositions of all the sciences that try to decipher and interpret the signs of man.[37]

It cannot be said, however, that the Ricoeurian subject will recover itself entirely at the end of this act of reflection. There will always be a fracture engraved in the Ricoeurian *cogito*, because the interpretation of human signs is an endless task that is subjected to the conflict of interpretations, because the subject is always prey to infantile regressions and to the realm of drives, because "the language of force can never be overcome by the language of meaning."[38] Ricoeur's desire for a reflexive hermeneutics remains a task as much as a wager. Like Freud, Ricoeur knows well that some drives—"the pure affects" like anxiety without an object—are destined to refuse all representations and all interpretations. But Ricoeur still wants to keep his wager on meaning, that there is a possible recovery of force in meaning. This is expressed in the following passage, through his choice to use the simple future tense:

> But even so we should not overlook the fact that a pure affect, an affect that has come directly from the unconscious—such as anxiety with no particular object—is an affect waiting for a substitutive idea to which it can attach itself. An affect that we describe as being severed from its idea is an affect in search of a new ideational support by which it can penetrate into consciousness.[39]

In spite of this wager, the Ricoeurian subject cannot claim to be a complete subject; it remains a becoming-subject. As an asymptotic subject, it does not project an abstract reflection like a Cartesian apperception; instead, it continually projects a concrete reflection on the signs in which its existence is objectified. That is to say that the subject remains a "promised land" for Ricoeur, while it is a "forbidden land" for Deleuze and Guattari. The Ricoeurian becoming-subject seeks to achieve, without ever hoping to fully reach, what the Deleuzian rhizome seeks to lose:

> Where psychoanalysis says, "Stop, find your self again," we should say instead, "Let's go further still, we haven't found our BwO yet, we haven't sufficiently dismantled our self." Substitute forgetting for anamnesis, experimentation for interpretation.[40]

DESIRE, GUILT, AND LAW

If we were limited to a schematic opposition of one term to another between the projects of Ricoeur and Deleuze, this confrontation would remain of limited interest. We have clearly identified a shared post-structuralist vehemence (to escape the closure of the system) at work in the two philosophers. But the radicality of schizoanalysis, which is deliberately outside the subject, clashes with and throws a wrench into any reflective hermeneutics (and vice versa). To extend the previous developments, what remains to be explored is a third site of confrontation that leads more explicitly to ethico-moral questions.

For the contemporary reader of *Oneself as Another*, delving into the ethical texts of Ricoeur that were written in the 1960s can offer some unexpected surprises. To be sure, his later formal distinction between ethics and morality frees ethics from a relation to the law, commandments and sanctions that define morality. Although one does not encounter this distinction explicitly in the articles collected, for instance, in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, one is struck

by Ricoeur's strong suspicion, even rejection, of values expressed in terms of law, obedience, and sanction. Texts like these resonate strongly with Deleuze's philosophy (with or without Guattari). We can indeed find much in common in an aphorism from Spinoza that Ricoeur as well as Deleuze and Guattari appropriate: "Philosophy is a meditation, not on death, but on life."

Deleuze's Spinozism has been known for a long time, due to his two books on Spinoza and his courses at the University of Vincennes[41] and because Spinoza accompanied him throughout his philosophical journey. By contrast, Ricoeur's Spinozism is still largely unknown. Ricoeur did not devote a systematic study to the author of the *Ethics*, but Spinoza is one of the few philosophers who marks every intellectual stage of his work. One could even go so far as to say that Ricoeurian ontology is fundamentally Spinozist to the extent that it makes the *conatus* the foundation of all beings, including human beings. In contrast with Deleuze, especially in *Difference and Repetition*, Ricoeur rarely ventures onto the terrain of fundamental ontology in the sense of being as being; his interest is directed primarily toward the acting (and suffering) human. The last study in *Oneself as Another* only sketches—with Aristotle, Heidegger, and Spinoza—a fundamental ontology in which being is thought of as "both an actual and powerful basis": it is thus up to the *Ethics* to resolve the aporias of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and Heidegger's *Being and Time*. But this idea that existence is fundamentally a desire to be and an effort to exist can also be found in Ricoeur's early works on hermeneutics, especially his reflections on Freud. There the originality of Ricoeur's hermeneutics as well as his reflexive philosophy is on display, which distances it completely from Cartesianism:

> [B]y understanding ourselves, we said, we appropriate to ourselves the meaning of our desire to be or of our effort to exist. Existence, we can now say, is desire and effort. We term it effort in order to stress its positive energy and its dynamism; we term it desire in order to designate its lack and its poverty: Eros is the son of Poros and Penia. Thus the *cogito* is no longer the preten-

> tious act it was initially—I mean its pretension of positing itself; it appears as *already* posited in being.[42]

It is this being who is already in being (as part of existence) that calls for an act of appropriation (as part of the reflexive act) through the tools for interpreting the objectified signs of existence (as part of hermeneutics). Ricoeur and Deleuze undeniably share a Spinozist worldview: a vitalism that is in proximity in the sense of the ontological primacy that they grant to desire and life.

But, at the heart of this shared world and of this ontological proximity, something foreign still remains between them. Recall, on the one hand, that this ontology of desire is not the object of a reflexive and hermeneutic retrieval for Deleuze. The reflexive act, as Ricoeur envisions it (with or without Freud), can be a way of deadening desire—and of tying it up with dogmatic meaning. Moreover, we can insist on the iconoclastic nature of Deleuze's (with Guattari) theory of desire. Whereas Ricoeur conceives of desire as "lack and need," Deleuze and Guattari envision it as the "production of intensities." In a sense, Deleuze and Guattari talk about desire in the same way as Ricoeur speaks about effort ("a positive energy and dynamism") in his recovery of the *conatus*:

> All that counts is for pleasure to be the flow of desire itself, Immanence, instead of a measure that interrupts it or delivers it to the three phantoms, namely, internal lack, higher transcendence, and apparent exteriority. If pleasure is not the norm of desire, it is not by virtue of a lack that is impossible to fill but, on the contrary, by virtue of its positivity, in other words, the plane of consistency it draws in the course of its process.[43]

The practical and ethical problem that Deleuze and Guattari pose is not merely what can limit desire (the internal, the higher, the external) but equally what type of plane of consistency on which desire is constructed. For desire can desire one's own annihilation or "desire the power to annihilate. Money, army, police and State desire, fascist desire, even fascism is desire."[44]

The Spinozist ground that renders the ontologies of Ricoeur and Deleuze both near and distant is also echoed ethically in their relation to Nietzsche. As much as it seems appropriate to speak about Ricoeur's Spinozism, it seems much more difficult to speak of a Nietzschean Ricoeur. But this adjective would be completely suited to Deleuze.[45] There is, however, an undeniably Nietzschean "mood," which runs through some of Ricoeur's texts from the 1960s, though not without some reservations. The quarrel between the Nietzscheans and the anti-Nietzscheans[46] is filtered through the quarrel between the "humanists" and "anti-humanists,"[47] but it is hard to apply in the case of Ricoeur. There is no *a priori* rejection of (nor an excessive fascination with) Nietzsche, because the master of suspicion represents an indispensible moment to pass through in the development of a hermeneutics as well as an ethics. With Nietzsche (Freud and Marx), the hermeneutics of suspicion serves as a method of interpretation that allows false consciousness and the illusions of the sovereignty of meaning to be unmasked: "this use calls for a very specific philosophy which subordinates the entire problem of truth and error to the expression of the will to power."[48] Ricoeur sees the two hermeneutic styles as both irreducible and complementary: one style is conceived as suspicion, demystification, reduction of illusion, and deconstruction of meaning; the other is conceived as manifestation, restoration, recollection of a meaning that is addressed to me in the form of a message or proclamation.

But hermeneutics remains what separates these two post-structuralist styles. So, it is not the Nietzsche who leads back to the school of suspicion that helps to explain the proximity that can be established at this point between Ricoeur and Deleuze. It is the Nietzsche who is the sworn enemy of guilt, resentment, the spirit of vengeance, and the desire for consolation that brings them together. The great Nietzschean lesson for Deleuze can be summed up by the constitution of a radical philosophy of immanence, the deconstruction of idols (that are called God or human), and forms of transcendence (external or above) that inhibit desire and the will to power. The will to power, for Deleuze, does not signify the "desire to dominate"[49] but the affirmation of existence, joy, abundance, and

creation.[50] Nietzsche's lesson, like Kafka's, is about the hell of a life under the moral law, a law with Kant that becomes empty: "the law no longer says what is good, but the good is what the law says."[51]

This Nietzschean and Kafkian lesson is echoed by Ricoeur's texts as well that mark a very clear rejection, not of Kant's "radical evil" and hope, but of the moralistic and formalist Kant. Ricoeur rejects the Kant of the law, imperatives, and guilt:

> Guilt reveals the malediction of a life under the law . . . guilt leads to an accusation without accuser, a tribunal without judge, a verdict without author. Guilt has then become that irreversible misfortune described by Kaka: condemnation has become damnation.[52]

To Ricoeur, the genealogy of Nietzschean morality thus seems like a powerful attempt to liberate the idols, both metaphysical and religious, of a life lived under the governance of the law, of a dead life, and of damnation here below. The deconstruction of a morality of obligation is the condition of the possibility of ethics. For Deleuze, the substrate of this ethics can be drawn from Nietzsche as well as Spinoza, but for Ricoeur Nietzschean deconstruction is a necessary but insufficient moment. It is not that Ricoeur is unaware of the transvaluation of values, of the arrival of the superman, of the promise of *amor fati*, and of the innocence of becoming. But Nietzsche himself remains the prisoner of resentment and remains on this side of the character of Zarathustra:

> It is doubtful whether anyone can live on the level of Zarathustra. Nietzsche himself, the man with the hammer, is not the superman that he proclaims. His aggression against Christianity remains caught up in the attitude of resentment; the rebel is not, and cannot be at the same level as the prophet. Nietzsche's major work remains an accusation of accusation and hence falls short of a pure affirmation of life.[53]

That is the reason why everything remains open according to Nietzsche. Nietzschean deconstruction is only a moment that closes

the door to a morality of obligation and prohibition and that conjures away a form of life,

> which would take the form of a simple submission to commandments or to an alien or supreme will. . . . We must accept as a positive good the critique of ethics and religion that has been undertaken by the school of suspicion. From it we have learned to understand that the commandment that gives death, not life, is a product and projection of our own weakness.[54]

What ethics is thus liberated after passing through the Nietzschean school of suspicion? The preaching delivered by Zarathustra, as a pure affirmation of life, exercises a fascination over Ricoeur, to be sure, and brings him even closer to Deleuze. This preaching, as Ricoeur says, would be "both originary and post-religious."[55] But this preaching, as preaching, would still be at the borders of philosophy. This is the reason why Ricoeur prefers to turn back to Spinoza's ethics, conceived as a desire to be and an effort to exist. But strangely, the hermeneut seeks to couple this ethics of life, beyond prohibition and condemnation, with a preethical site, a poetic source of speaking and listening in the wake of the "later Heidegger":

> When word says something, when it reveals not only something about the meaning of beings but something about Being itself, as is the case with the poet, we are then confronted by what could be called the occurrence of word: something is said of which I am neither the source nor the master.[56]

This very Heideggerian turn toward the "ecology of things" allows Ricoeur also to rethink something like an authentic faith, after having passed through the Nietzschean test of atheism and the destruction of idols. Such a faith is precisely unsaddled of the weight of fault, the hell of accusation, and the sad passion of consolation. For Ricoeur, this preethical site of listening is not merely dwelling "where the poets are" but also a place for listening to the kerygma. With Ricoeur, one thus sees a sort of "Christianization" of Heideg-

gerian poetics in which there is "a relation to God as the word which precedes all prohibition and accusation."[57]

With this call to a new faith and this very Heideggerian recourse to the poetics of the thing, there is equally a distance from Deleuze: Ricoeur's "post-religious faith" contrasts with the "peaceful atheism" of Deleuze. This contrast does not diminish, however, Ricoeur's rootedness in the post-structuralist movement though the figure of Heidegger. Ricoeur's philosophical moment in the 1960s thus cannot be presented in terms of the opposition between Deleuze as "a thinker of excess who is the adversary of debt and the tribunal of judgment" and Ricoeur who is "a thinker of debt through care and cannot renounce the institution and duration."[58] Olivier Mongin tempers this contrast by showing "that it can no longer be displayed in ordinary terms of the quarrel over humanism, whether it concerns its structuralist version or its Kantian version."[59] This interpretation does not seem right or justified, if one sticks precisely to the ethical texts of the 1960s, where Ricoeur seeks to escape, like Deleuze, from the "tribunal of judgment," from a Kantian theory of the morality of obligation, and from the infernal dialectic of accusation and resentment. Though marked by reservations, there is indeed a "Nietzschean mood" in Ricoeur in the 1960s that connects him to other post-structuralist thinkers like Deleuze, Foucault, or Derrida, as well as to post-Kantian currents. This "Nietzschean mood" remains very paradoxical, however. Through it but also against it, Ricoeur does not give up thinking about evil, reformulating a philosophy of hope (in a Kantian vein), and promoting a new relationship to faith. These philosophical programs distance him from other French post-structuralists, without bringing him close to the advocates of humanism.

The contrast established by Mongin, although it could have been formulated differently, remains pertinent, if one refers to a later period (beginning in the 1990s) of Ricoeur's ethical thought that culminates in *Oneself as Another*. Hence the central importance of a historical approach to Ricoeur's work, because there is a decisive rupture at this period. One could initially argue in favor of continuity when Ricoeur sets out to distinguish between ethics and moral-

ity, the former being preserved by a relation to law, to obligation, and to sanction. But the tone is no longer the same as it was in *The Conflict of Interpretations*. Four points of emphasis lead us to say that here he has escaped from the post-structuralist movement. First, the "Nietzschean mood" seems more and more sparse in Ricoeur's ethico-moral philosophy,[60] and along with it, the poetics inspired by Heidegger is eclipsed.[61] Second, ethics, conceived as the "aim for the good life," takes a very Aristotelian color in place of the quasi-vitalist direction that was followed in the course of the 1960s. Third, although he affirmed the primacy of ethics over morality, the latter no longer has the same opprobrium as at the time of the article "Religion, Atheism, and Faith." The decisive shift consists in justifying a deontological moment. Instead of being accused of "a sore spot of philosophy itself,"[62] recourse to the moral law is necessary in order to test the "aim for the good life." From this point of view, there is indeed a return to Kant, at least to the Kant of the Second Critique, which takes place in *Oneself as Another*.

We began this chapter with Ricoeur's late homage of Deleuze, but it is mostly misleading. Not that one should doubt Ricoeur's words, but this homage does not attest to any immediate proximity between the two thinkers, though one might be able to speak, as a sort of oxymoron, about a distant proximity. There is undeniably a field of common adversaries, in the context of the dominance of structuralism and a shared ontological vehemence at work: the ambition to escape from the closure of the system of signs. But the hermeneutics that comes from Ricoeur in order to escape from this closure does not have an equivalent in the pragmatics of language proposed by Deleuze. Where their paths separate most is with regard to their respective readings of Freud and in their relation to psychoanalysis: while Ricoeur seeks to bring psychoanalysis into the orbit of hermeneutics and reflexive philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari seek to overturn it to the benefit of a radically new investigation of the unconscious that is called "schizoanalysis."

Ricoeur and Deleuze regain a share of intellectual proximity, however, in their ethical appropriation of Nietzsche and, especially, of Spinoza. If we resisted turning Ricoeur into a Nietzschean thinker

(as well as his contrary), it seemed fair to speak of a "Nietzschean mood" to characterize some of his texts that were published in the 1960s. Where Ricoeur and Deleuze meet is in their shared condemnation of a life governed by the moral law. This "Nietzschean mood" is one more reason to connect Ricoeur to the post-structuralist movement. This mood is extinguished, for the most part, starting in the 1990s when Ricoeur rehabilitates Kantian deontology in a surprising manner, though only as a moment, in the course of his "little ethics." This rehabilitation counts as a new distance from the post-structuralism of Deleuze and Guattari.

NOTES

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Bloomsbury, 2004). Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

2. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University, 1994).

3. Though it is "marked by Idealism," Deleuze and Guattari do "justice" to Ricoeur's interpretation of "Freud's theory of culture and its catastrophic evolution regarding the feeling of guilt: about the dead and the 'death of death'" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 420).

4. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* , 110.

5. Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

6. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 2*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 131–32.

7. Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Barbara Habberjam (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988).

8. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 431–36.

9. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* , trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

10. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 603.

11. It is surprising to note that a thinker like Jaspers, who is a central figure in Ricoeur's early works and a recurring figure in the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, gets reappropriated by them in very different ways: on the one side, as a pioneer of Christian existentialism and a thinker of guild; on the other side, as an avant-garde psychiatrist who helped to conceive "schizophrenia as a process."

12. Ricoeur, "Conviction et Critique" (entretien avec Nathalie Crom, Bruno Frapppat et Robert Miliorini), in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur* (Paris: Éditions de l'Herne, 2004), 15–18.

13. Ricoeur, "Conviction et critique," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur*, 17.

14. Olivier Mongin, "L'excès et la dette: Gille Deleuze et Paul Ricoeur ou l'impossible conversation?" in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur*, 271–85.

15. Declan Sheerin, *Deleuze and Ricoeur: Disavowed Affinities and the Narrative Self* (London: Continuum, 2009). This work is the most complete and rigorous study of Ricoeur and Deleuze to date.

16. P. Maniglier, ed. *Le moment philosophique des années 1960 en France* (Paris: PUF, 2011).

17. Paul Ricoeur, "Structure, Word, Event," in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 92.

18. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 82.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 7.

21. Ibid.

22. Declan Sheerin, *Deleuze and Ricoeur: Disavowed Affinities and the Narrative Self*, 5. Sheerin's work goes on to offer a more complete development of the relation between Deleuze and Ricoeur on the status of metaphor than can be provided here.

23. Ricoeur, "Structure and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 46–47.

24. Mongin, "L'excès et la dette," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur*, 274. As Mongin shows, the difference between the conceptions of time and the event in Ricoeur and Deleuze has direct effects on how they analyze literary works. It would be necessary to devote a full study, for example, to their respective readings of Proust.

25. Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 5.

26. Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 233.

27. On Deleuze's relation to psychoanalysis, see the work by Monique David-Ménard, *Deleuze et la psychanalyse* (Paris: PUF, 2005); on Ricoeur's relation to psychoanalysis, see Vinicio Busacchi, *Ricoeur vs. Freud: Une nouvelle compréhension de l'homme* (Paris: Harmattan, 2011).

28. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 66.

29. Note as well the importance of Heinz Kohut's "self-psychology" in the development of the Ricoeurian hermeneutics of the self. See Michel Dupuis, "Notes sur Paul Ricoeur et Heinz Kohut*," Etudes Ricoeuriennes/ Ricoeur Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 9–20.

30. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 24.

31. This hypothesis was suggested to me by Fabrice Joubard based on his forthcoming work on the theory of fantasy and delirium in Deleuze.

32. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 24.

33. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 38.

34. Ibid., 32.

35. Ibid., 159.

36. Sheerin, *Deleuze and Ricoeur*, 5.

37. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, 46.

38. Ibid., 149.

39. Ibid., 146.

40. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 151.

41. Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, trans. Martin Joughin (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990); Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1988).

42. Ricoeur, "Existence and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 21.

43. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 156–57.

44. Ibid., 165.

45. Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche's French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststructuralism* (London: Routledge, 1995). Schrift shows that the Nietzschean source is one of the hallmarks of French post-structuralism. Nietzsche's philosophy prefigures the fundamental themes that one finds in Derrida, Foucault, and Deleuze.

46. See Alain Boyer et al., *Pourquoi nous ne sommes pas nietzscheens?* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2002).

47. See Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *La Pensée 68* (Paris: Folio, 1988).

48. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, 26.

49. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 83.

50. The will to power also culminates in the character of Dionysus as well as Zarathustra: "To redeem what is past in mankind and to recreate all 'It was' until the will speaks: 'But I wanted it so! I shall want it so—' This I told them was redemption, this alone I taught them to call redemption. Will—that is the name of liberation and the messenger of joy." Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ed. Robert Pippin, trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 158–59. Note, however, that other texts by Nietzsche (especially *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals*) are more equivocal, more "biologizing" from this point of view, when the philosopher defends the warring aristocracy, of the domination of the "blond barbarians" with "pure blood."

51. Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 131.

52. Ricoeur, "Guilt, Ethics, and Religion," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 430.

53. Ricoeur, "Religion, Atheism, and Faith," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 447.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., 448.

56. Ibid., 449.

57. Ibid., 451.

58. Mongin, "L'excès et la dette," in *Cahiers de l'Herne Ricoeur*, 282.

59. Ibid.

60. It would be imprecise to state that this "Nietzschean mood" completely disappears. It reappears especially, as we noted at the beginning of this chapter, in *Memory, History, Forgetting* (287–92), where Ricoeur looks to Nietzsche for active forgetting as a remedy for the spirit of vengeance and the weight of the past. It is also on this occasion that he does justice to the Deleuzian interpretation of Nietzsche.

61. The retreat of Heideggerian poetics does not imply the disappearance of poetics in general as a possibility of Ricoeurian ethics, especially if one considers precisely the considerable place occupied in *Oneself as Another* by narrative in the sense of *muthos* as a laboratory of ethical experiments on the self. The resources of the threefold mimesis inspired by

Aristotle have slowly dethroned the path cleared by Heidegger's poetic dwelling. I thank Marie-France Begué for having called my attention to this point.

62. Ricoeur, "Religion, Atheism, and Faith," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 449.

4

THE CARE OF THE SELF AND CARE FOR OTHERS

With the exception of their joint participation on a roundtable on "Philosophy and Truth,"[1] there was never any direct dialogue between Ricoeur and Foucault.[2] The two philosophers were involved in very different intellectual circles.[3] Their initial philosophical training explains much of this non-encounter. Like Bourdieu, Foucault was strongly influenced by Canguilhem's teachings on history and the philosophy of science, while Ricoeur first took up arms with phenomenology and existentialism. Whereas Ricoeur sought both to conserve and to surpass phenomenology with the resources of hermeneutics, Foucaultian epistemology (which was largely directed against the phenomenological tradition) sought to "graft" Nietzsche's genealogical method onto the history of knowledge.

Along very different paths, Ricoeur and Foucault both worked to make philosophy something besides a history of their own discipline and to open it up to the human and social sciences. Although they were in competition and came from different traditions (German hermeneutics for the one and French positivism for the other), their respective works are presented partly as epistemologies of the human and social sciences. This debate cannot be settled by knowing that there was a "structuralist" moment in the early philosophical work of Foucault,[4] but one can say that he shares with Ricoeur

the aim of developing a post-structuralist philosophical horizon. Yet, these remain two rival and opposed endeavors that do not clear a shared path. Foucault rarely calls on Ricoeur's help in his analyses. And, though he cites Foucault more frequently, Ricoeur clearly marks his distance from Foucault's project in the *Archeology of Knowledge*. Ricoeur agrees with Foucault in conceiving the history of knowledge in terms of "discontinuity" and the logic of *episteme*, but only if one recalls that "the archeology of knowledge cannot completely break away from the general context wherein temporal continuity finds its legitimacy, and therefore must be articulated in terms of a history of ideas in the sense of Mandelbaum's special histories."[5] As usual, Ricoeur sets out to establish the structures of epistemological mediations between continuity and discontinuity in history (without purely and simply rejecting Foucault's genealogical approach):

> The passage from one *episteme* to another comes close to the dialectic of innovation and sedimentation by which we have more than once characterized traditionality—discontinuity corresponding to the moment of innovation, continuity to that of sedimentation.[6]

Ricoeur never adhered to a hypothetical "death of the human," but this did not prevent him from subscribing to the deconstruction of the subject carried out beginning with Foucault's early works. The hermeneutics of tradition and the archeology of knowledge share the same onto-anthropological substrate, inasmuch as the "notion of a historical memory prey to the work of history" requires "the same decentering as the one Foucault refers to."[7] Based on this common ground, it can make sense to compare Ricoeur's post-structuralist hermeneutics with Foucault's post-structuralist archeology (as was the case with Bourdieusian sociology and Derridean deconstruction): *the subject is not the master of meaning.* It is thus quite incorrect to say that Ricoeur would have only been resistant and opposed to the early writings of Foucault. It is nonetheless the case that only the later Foucault (following the publication of the

History of Sexuality), the Foucault of the "care of the self," exerted a true attraction on our philosopher. This might explain his later homage (better than the one given to Deleuze). It is to the extent that "Foucault distanced himself from himself with his last two books" that Ricoeur felt "closer to him."[8] It is through this avowal of intellectual proximity that a dialogue between the two philosophers can be most fecund. It is not a mere chance that a secondary literature is beginning to emerge that pays attention to the distances and proximities between the ethical project of a hermeneutics of the self, in Ricoeur, and the history of a hermeneutics of the subject, in Foucault,[9] or shows how "the ontology of understanding" in Ricoeur fills in a lacuna in the Foucaultian theory of subjectification.[10]

In contrast with the preceding chapters, my contribution here does not seek to provide a point-by-point analysis of the two philosophers. Instead, I will set out to provide a Foucaultian reading of Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology. Although they never address Ricoeur, Foucault's analyses—drawn from his courses at the Collège de France and published as *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*[11]—can help us to speak and think differently about the genealogy of Ricoeurian anthropology.

In his history of the hermeneutics of the subject in Western philosophical culture, Foucault defends the thesis that until the seventeenth century, the problem of knowledge, of the conditions of accessing the truth (including especially the truth about oneself), is indissociable—with the notable exceptions of Aristotelian philosophy and the Gnostic movement—from a requirement to care for oneself and to transform oneself in an ethical way that the philosopher calls spirituality. The search for the truth transfigures the subject "in return." It is the Socratic gesture, through which "know thyself" (*gnothi seauton*) is framed by "care of the self" (*epimeleia heautou*), that fulfills its destiny through the Hellenistic and Roman culture and up to the Christian era. One must become other than oneself in order to have access to the truth about the world and about oneself. To shed greater light on oneself, one is called to metamorphize.

A decisive rupture, according to Foucault, takes place with Cartesian and post-Cartesian philosophy—even though it was prepared for a long time by Scholastic and Medieval theology—when the conditions for accessing the truth are freed from the care of the self: "we can say that we enter the modern age (I mean, the history of truth enters its modern period) when it is assumed that what gives access to the truth, the condition for the subject's access to the truth, is knowledge (*connaissance*) and knowledge alone."[12] Is this split between knowledge and care of the self definitive for the subsequent course of the history of philosophy? If one follows Foucault's analyses, the care of the self stands as the great forgetting and repression in modern and contemporary history of the truth. Spirituality was banned as a condition for accessing the truth by positivism as well as Kantianism, not to mention by the triumph of phenomenology and analytic philosophy in the second half of the past century. This repression does not signify an abandonment of moral philosophy but a disjunction between the practical training of the subject and the access to truth. In spite of this decisive rupture, the connections between truth and care of the self have never been completely broken. Foucault thus recognizes the signs of a return to the founding Socratic gesture, to *epimeleia heautou*, although this notion is rarely taken up and made explicit, in some of the major figures of contemporary philosophy, including Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Freud.

It is in the context of this new problem of the history of the philosophy of the subject that we can introduce Ricoeur's hermeneutic anthropology. If the notion of care of the self is rarely mentioned by Ricoeur,[13] aside from a few allusions to it in paying homage to Foucault[14] or the developments leading to a direct discussion of Heidegger's notion of *Sorge*, it seems pertinent to me to rethink Ricoeurian anthropology measured by this concept, inasmuch as it provides a renewed *concern* about the care of the self.[15]

BECOMING HUMAN AND ADULT

There would be little sense in speaking about a pure and simple return to Ancient or Christian forms of spirituality, because they are situated in a context and "technologies of the self" that are for the most part foreign to Ricoeur's texts. One does not find any trace in Ricoeur's philosophy of demands for purification or *askesis* in order to shed more light on oneself, others, or the world. Yet, there is indeed an echo of Socratic spirituality in Ricoeur, which itself is the corollary of a direct opposition to the Cartesian rupture that Foucault speaks about:

> The first truth—*I am, I think*—remains as abstract and empty as it is invincible; it has to be "mediated" by the ideas, actions, works, institutions, and monuments that objectify it. It is in these objects, in the widest sense of the word, that the Ego must lose and find itself. We can say, in a somewhat paradoxical sense, that a philosophy of reflection is not a philosophy of consciousness, if by consciousness we mean immediate self-consciousness. Consciousness, as we shall say later, is a task, but it is a task because it is not a given.[16]

Ricoeur considers it illusory or vain to believe, as in the Cartesian enterprise, that evidence can be based on the truth about oneself alone. In Foucaultian terms, one can say that Ricoeur reproaches Descartes for putting the care of the self outside of his attempt to establish the first truths.[17] Ricoeur connects this putting out of play to immediate philosophies of consciousness. In contrast, the mediate philosophy that he seeks is directly connected with the injunction to spirituality in the sense that it is defined by Foucault:

> Spirituality postulates that the truth is never given to the subject by right . . . it postulates that for the subject to have right of access to the truth he must be changed, transformed, shifted, and become, to some extent and up to a certain point, other than himself. This truth is only given to the subject at a price that brings the subject's being into play.[18]

The sense of mediate philosophy also presupposes that the original condition of human being is illusion, distraction, and obscurity; the clarity of evidence is thus powerless to know *who one is*.

What type of spirituality is Ricoeur speaking about when he calls for a mastery of oneself through an original dispossession? This concerns a spirituality that points back to Christian sources and that is reformulated in the contemporary era in both atheist and Christian existentialism (Karl Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel). This philosophical heritage allows Ricoeur to retie the connections with the injunction of the care of the self, because existentialism considers that one has to become what one is not yet. It is in this sense that one has to be concerned about oneself. First dispossessed from the center of one's existence, the Ricoeurian subject is not a given but an achievement. This spirituality, though expressed in another historical and theoretical context, will be rediscovered in the Freudian project when it seeks to capture the I "there where it was." If the self is lost as an origin, it can be recovered through "effort": the effort to become an adult who can fall prey to infantile regressions. The price for the subject to pay in order attain the truth about oneself is nothing other than the work of the cure. This is where Freudian spirituality resides, and it left an indelible mark on Ricoeurian anthropology as it matured in the 1960s.[19]

The invention of psychoanalysis and the renewal of Christian philosophy, via existentialism, are among the most important sources for understanding the initial formulation of the care of the self in a Ricoeurian mode, against the grain of the Cartesian rupture. To be sure, phenomenology, in its Husserlian form, does in a sense follow this fundamental split between *gnothi seauton* and *epimeleia heautou*. But it is remarkable that the Ricoeurian reappropriation of the phenomenological tradition goes in the opposite direction of this rupture; it consists of putting the care of the self "to work" in an enterprise that is initially presented as a pure description of what is given to consciousness.[20] And this is also symptomatic of the later Husserl's phenomenological project (the Husserl of the *Krisis*), with which Ricoeur feels closest. It seeks to establish new pathways between knowledge of oneself and the transformation of the self,

and in that respect, there is still a form of spirituality provided by the father of phenomenology.

The philosophy of mediation to which Ricoeur is allied thus implies that the subject—who, in reality, is not a subject in the substantialist sense of the term—must be transformed in order to attain greater transparency about itself. This call for transformation is something that Ricoeur calls a "task," because the coincidence of the self with itself is not a given. By espousing a mediate philosophy of the subject, he thus requires each person to take care of the self through a work on oneself, a progressive transformation of oneself that is inherent in all forms of spirituality. Paradoxically, the price of this work on oneself presupposes a distance from oneself. It is necessary, as Ricoeur says, to pass through the mediation of "representations, works, institutions, monuments" that is to say, the objectification of oneself. It is necessary to pass through "what is outside of oneself" in order to rediscover oneself. It is by taking a distance from an immediate reflexivity of oneself, by taking the detour through these mediations, that one can hope to better understand oneself. This "task" presupposes the mobilization of a particular technology of the self, one which is presented as a method of deciphering. It involves interpreting all of the mediations through which the self is given in the world:

> It is the task of this hermeneutics to show that existence arrives at expression, at meaning, and at reflection only through the continual exegesis of all the significations that come to light in the world of culture. Existence becomes a self—human and adult—only by appropriating this meaning, which first resides "outside," in works, institutions, and cultural monuments in which the life of the spirit is objectified.[21]

It is through hermeneutics that Ricoeurian spirituality can be fully realized: the subject gains mastery and lucidity, through this continual exegesis of the self and this endless apprenticeship of the signs of human existence. In this sense, one could say that there is no "subject" in Ricoeur, if what is meant by "subject" is a fixed,

unchanging, substantialist conception of being. There is only a becoming-subject, that is to say, a process of subjectification that is coextensive with the interpretive process of mediations. There is no subject as a destination or a point of departure; the "subject" is a land that is eternally promised but never realized.

What we should be concerned about, as Ricoeur says, is "becoming human and adult." This injunction is not completed at any watershed moment of our lives. We have to be concerned with ourselves, humanize ourselves and escape childhood, throughout our lives, as long as we can conduct interpretive activity. With Ricoeur, the subject will never belong to itself entirely and will never know itself perfectly. One will never be able to say to oneself: up to now, I have cared for myself but henceforth I will be concerned with other things; my "task" is complete. For "the continual exegesis of all significations" is the corollary of an infinite transformation of oneself. In other words, continually becoming other than what one is requires a continual reinterpretation of the objectifications of human existence.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE SELF AND THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES

Is interpretation not simply a technique, a method, a *Kunstlehre*? Interpretation, as a technique, derives from an onto-anthropological structure that defines our being and action as a "hermeneutic animal." From Heidegger, Ricoeur learned to place the structures of understanding and interpretation at the very core of the human being. Indeed, according to Heidegger, one must not only take care of oneself but also of being, or rather, the meaning of being. Yet, the essential point concerns the important role granted in *Being and Time* to *Sorge*, which Heidegger treats as a true existential: we have to be concerned about the mastery of "our ownmost possibility." This Stoic mastery is a struggle against the facticity of a being stuck within the anonymity of "the they." It necessitates bearing the burden of what we are always fleeing and neglect every day—that is,

our own death. Our liberation from anxiety about death requires the reappropriation of our power to be and to act.

In spite of his strong reservations about the theme of being-toward-death, Ricoeur discovers in Heideggerian ontology a true rebirth of spirituality. It is at the same time the recovery of *epimeleia heautou* over *gnothi seauton* as well as the restoration of the care of the self over the "Cartesian moment." The Heideggerian project does not only reawaken the return to the forgetfulness of being but also the forgetfulness of the care of the self. There is thus both a recovery and a significant reversal that takes place with Heidegger and Gadamer. The problem of the care of the self and of being becomes omnipresent, to the point of compromising knowledge, method, and the sciences.[22] While the "Cartesian moment" played out in two ways "by philosophically requalifying the *gnothi seauton* (know yourself), and by discrediting the *epimeleia heautou* (care of the self),"[23] the "Heideggerian moment" was already prepared by Nietzsche and contributed importantly to disqualifying knowledge and requalifying the care of the self and of being. The corollary to this Heideggerian moment of the care of the self is the onto-hermeneutic revolution that takes place along with it: understanding and interpretation are placed at the core of the human being and swim against the tide of a hermeneutics that would be limited to the epistemology of the human sciences.[24]

It is of capital importance to take this "Heideggerian moment" into account in order to appreciate fully the Ricoeurian moment of the care of the self. As we have noted, Ricoeur fully acknowledges this renewal of the concern about the care of the self, but only on the condition of not excluding the logic of knowledge and method. Ultimately, he is closer to the original gestation of Socratic spirituality. Beyond the Cartesian rupture and the Heideggerian recovery of the care of the self, Ricoeur pursues the path of a new connection between *epimeleia heautou* and *gnothi seauton*, between truth and method, between ontological hermeneutics and epistemological hermeneutics. Ricoeur refuses to sacrifice knowledge, science, and methods of interpretations on the altar of ontological hermeneutics, because it would leave one unable to decipher the mediations and

objectifications of human existence. Heideggerian spirituality offers a route that is too short for hermeneutics and *Sorge*—in contrast with the long route of hermeneutics that is followed by Ricoeur. This translates into a demand for infinite transformation of the self,

> substituting, for the short route of the Analytic of Dasein, the long route which begins by analyses of language. In this way we will continue to keep in contact with the disciplines which seek to practice interpretation in a methodical manner, and we will resist the temptation to separate *truth*, characteristic of understanding, from the *method* put into operation by disciplines which have sprung from exegesis.[25]

The sciences of interpretation are so essential in Ricoeur's eyes because recollection in the Heideggerian sense is not sufficient for accessing the meaning of being or the self. In contrast, the human and social sciences provide rigorous methods and use the tools that are better suited for deciphering the objectifications of human existence. Whence the increasing interest over the course of Ricoeur's career in questions of methodology and the epistemology of the human sciences, questions that are taken to be nonessential—since they are non-fundamental and non-ontological—by Heideggerians like Gadamer or Derrida. It would indeed be possible to consider Ricoeur's enormous contribution to the epistemology of the human sciences on its own—that is, to appreciate it through the lens of knowledge for its own sake.

But, if we were to remain within the whole architecture of Ricoeurian philosophy, this reading would bypass something of decisive importance. It would bypass the care of the self that is the ultimate basis of this methodological and epistemological enterprise. To see Ricoeur only as an epistemologist would be to reduce him to the famous "Cartesian moment." When the sciences—and the human sciences in particular—only have the aim for a better understanding of the human, they contribute to concealing the care of the self, which directly implies the question of the transformation of the human and of society. In this light, one can better understand

why the Marxist question has haunted the human sciences throughout the twentieth century. Marx sought to provide knowledge about history, the laws for the evolution of human society, as a means for a radical transformation of them. With Marx, Socratic spirituality is still at work, though it is posited in radically new terms as praxis: *epimeleia heautou* is the ultimate basis of *gnothi seauton*. And if Ricoeur spent so much time studying Marx's work, and especially his anthropology, this is because there still remains a spirituality in Marxism. If the Marxist question remains on the spectrum of the human sciences, this is due to the stakes of the transformation (and usually the revolution) of society. It is the mourning that is difficult to work through for those practitioners of the human sciences who seek to be emancipated from the Marxist legacy: to forget the care of society would amount to turning the human sciences into purely descriptive and explanatory sciences—more precisely, into purely "positive" sciences.

If a growing number of representatives of the human sciences are identifying with Ricoeurian epistemology, this is not solely due to its reflexive values. It is also because it has to do with a type of knowledge that is ultimately based on a form of spirituality. Sometimes considered as an alternative to Marxism, this spirituality does not renounce the care of individuals and society, that is to say, their transformation. Let's try to clearly understand the chief position of Ricoeur's hermeneutic epistemology. The philosopher's efforts are directed toward the methods and techniques of interpretation in the human sciences, because their validity and effectiveness are contingent upon the self's ability to better understand itself by deciphering the objectifications of human existence. We are thus at the core of *gnothi seauton*. This access to a greater truth about oneself presupposes a transformation of oneself, which requires a loss of the self as an origin and the recovery of the self through the apprenticeship of signs. Self-knowledge thus presupposes a prior work on oneself. But this knowledge of oneself is not only valuable for its own sake. It applies to one's ability to become "human and adult." A flawed technique or distorted interpretation of mediations implies a lesser degree of self-knowledge. This entails negligence toward oneself, a

sprain in self-mastery and the humanization of the self. The transformation of the self is posited as both a condition for the access to self-knowledge and the product of it. Ricoeur conceives the relation between care of the self and knowledge of the self in dialectical terms. Ricoeur's long route through the human sciences ultimately has a single preoccupation: *epimeleia heautou*. In this sense, one can say that he has offered, more than any other thinker of his time, a re-spiritualization of the human and social sciences.

THE CARE FOR JUST INSTITUTIONS

To speak about the forgetting or repression of the care of the self ever since the "Cartesian moment" might seem strange in times like ours, which are often characterized by the excess of narcissism, by the cult of the self, the love of one's own body, the withdrawal into the private sphere, and indifference toward the collectivity. But, this is to be mistaken about what is meant by spirituality and about the conditions for the emergence of the care of the self in Greek culture. Michel Foucault recalls the very austere rules, concerning the body and the mind, that had to be followed by those who took up the care of the self. For the most part, it involved renouncing what is valued today (the accumulation of wealth, the search for glory, the cult of the body, etc.) as a false care of the self. One would also be mistaken to find in the care of the self, as it is developed in the spirituality descending from Socrates, a sort of withdrawal to the empirical ego (and hence it is important to speak in terms of the "self" and not the "ego"). Instead, in a seemingly paradoxical way, it is a matter of taking a distance from oneself—which requires a knowledge of the world, the role of the city, the play of the passions, and the rules of reason—in order to then return to oneself. The formation of the care of the self cannot express—at least in the Socratic *epimeleia heautou*—a disdain or indifference toward the affairs of the City. If one examines the painstaking analyses that Foucault devotes to Plato's "Alcibiades," the care of the self is put to the service of the care for the City. When Socrates asks Alcibiades, who must take on political

responsibilities, to take care of himself, this is indeed in the sense that he will have to take care of his citizens.

These seemingly paradoxical features of the Socratic care of the self can also be found in Ricoeurian spirituality. It would be a huge mistake to regard the first formulation of his hermeneutics of the self as an exaltation of the self, a savage egocentrism, or a withdrawal into oneself. Recall the two fundamental features of the Ricoeurian *epimeleia heautou*. On the one hand, it involves taking care to become "human and adult" and everything that this has to do with transformation, renunciation (especially of infantile narcissism), self-possession, working on oneself, and the acquisition of methods of deciphering. On the other hand, the Ricoeurian care of the self presupposes a distance from oneself, the decentering of the self, the forgetting of an original self lost in the illusion of a self-coinciding, in order to learn to know the signs in which human life is objectified.

In spite of this ontological opening onto the world, the structure of the first formulation of Ricoeurian spirituality—correlating with his first hermeneutics centered on symbols—does not clearly open onto care for the other. Undeniably, Ricoeur did write articles in the 1950s and 1960s that attest to care of the *socius*, the neighbor and the City, especially those appearing in *History and Truth*.[26] But it must be recognized that this care for the other is not clearly aligned with the first construction of his hermeneutics of the self. If Ricoeur speaks of ethics at the time of the "conflict of interpretations," it is still in terms of a spirituality that is tinted with Spinozism and Nietzscheanism. The "task" is to recover our effort to be, our own-most abilities, and our lost powers. The face of the other is hardly visible in the search for the self.

Ricoeur's work undergoes a major shift in direction, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, by explicitly and fundamentally integrating the care for the other, societies, and institutions within the care of the self. *Oneself as Another* is the masterpiece of philosophical anthropology that marks this decisive rupture in his itinerary. Whereas the object par excellence of the care of the self in the course of the first development of Ricoeur's hermeneutics concerns

"becoming human and adult," the purpose of the second phase of his hermeneutics of the self is expressed in terms of the "aim for the good life with and for others in just institutions."

One might be surprised, however, when looking at the first four studies of *Oneself as Another*. Ricoeur offers an extended discussion of some representatives of analytic philosophy (Strawson, Searle, Austin, etc.).[27] This is a surprise to the extent that this current of contemporary philosophy, which derives mostly from Wittgenstein's pragmatics and Frege's semantics, undertook the neutralization of the care of the self, by ultimately repeating the "Cartesian moment" that divides between access to the truth and transformation of the subject. There is nothing in this variety of positivism that would lead us to reconceptualize spirituality for our times. Instead, it is noteworthy that the representatives of analytic philosophy express indifference at best and disdain at worst for the type of philosophical question. The care of the self would be deemed a hollow and empty question like the errors of metaphysics. No transformation of the subject is required to formulate true propositions; knowledge becomes completely autonomous from the subjective conditions of self-transformation.

Under such terms, how can it be explained that *Oneself as Another*, which marks the culminating point of the care of the self in Ricoeur's anthropology, grants so much space (more than a third of the work) to a philosophical tradition that symbolizes, in many respects, the abandonment of spirituality? Just as it has been said that Ricoeur sought to spiritualize phenomenology and to re-spiritualize the human and social sciences, it can also be said that he sought to spiritualize analytic philosophy. Ricoeur does not seek to lead astray the philosophical project of "positivist" disciplines, which are governed by the principle of knowledge that is independent from the care of the self. He does not reject this philosophical choice in principle for the simple reason that, in contrast with the Heideggerian "recovery" of the care of the self, he perceives the semantics of action as a powerful tool for understanding oneself. Analytic philosophy offers new ways of knowing oneself that can indirectly benefit the care that one gives to oneself. Here one can rediscover the same

founding principle that his hermeneutic anthropology employed at the time of the conflict of interpretations: *to care for oneself, in order to better know oneself; to know oneself, in order to better care for oneself*. This is how Ricoeur's approach should be understood: first, he sets out to discuss the "technical" problems presented by this new knowledge of oneself on their own; then, he introduces questioning about the care of the self into this philosophical program. In reality, Ricoeur seeks less to spiritualize analytic philosophy, properly speaking, than to magnetize the methods of knowing oneself that it offers to his project of constructing a hermeneutics of the self. In other words, analytic philosophy can discuss Ricoeur's reflections on the semantics of action by remaining on the first level of reading, that is to say, by discussing the method of knowing for its own sake. But to assess Ricoeur's philosophical project as a whole and its ultimate purpose, it is necessary to move to a second level of reading and see how this new *gnothi seauton* remains accompanied by the same *epimeleia heautou*.

Three examples can help us to understand this reading strategy. The first example is when Ricoeur discusses the theory of identifying reference in Strawson in the first study of *Oneself as Another*.[28] He is interested in this initially as knowledge—that is, the procedures through which we individualize something in general. Such procedures allow us to identify and reidentify something or someone. This tool allows for a better knowledge of individuals and thus of oneself. If the question of the care of the self is not Strawson's concern, Ricoeur utilizes this new theory of knowledge in order to respond to a fundamental concern that plays the role of a guiding thread of *epimeleia heautou* in the course of his debate with the analytic philosophers: what are the tools that allow us to ensure the permanence of the subject over time? While the alteration of the self directly threatens the integrity of personal identity, this care of the self also opens onto the care for the other and for institutions. If nothing about me were to last over time, how would the other be able to count on me?

The second example is when Ricoeur is interested in the process of ascription.[29] This process allows for the connection of an action

to an agent. It is not only a problem of causality between an agent and the actions that relate to him or her. Posed in ethical terms of the care of the self, ascription becomes a problem of moral and legal responsibility. Better knowledge of the processes of ascription allows, in other words, for an increase in the intensity of the care of the self. It involves both a concern that directly regards oneself (the continuity between the one who acts and the one to whom an action is imputed), the other when the action concerns him or her directly, and institutions when a law has been violated by the action in question.

The third example is located in the second study of *Oneself as Another*[30] when Ricoeur deals with the utterances of the speaking subject. He seeks to understand better the concrete context of interlocution in which one acts by speaking to another person, by distinguishing between performative statements and constative statements. This distinction, if one follows Austin's classifications,[31] does not have to do with spirituality at all. But, Ricoeur enlists this increased knowledge in the framework of a hermeneutics of the self. Among the various performatives, he attempts to bring out a modality that touches on both the care of the self and the care for the other: the promise. To analyze the promise as a performative is to show that "saying is doing": to say "I promise" presupposes that I will later do what I now say that I will do. Within this theory of language, Ricoeur puts to work the care of the self and the care for the other. The keeping of a promise directly involves the self in time. The kept promise is a way of taking seriously the worry that was mentioned previously: what is it that allows me to ensure permanence over time? The promise, at least when one's word is kept, thus stands as a unique modality of maintaining oneself. It is a performative unlike the other ones, at least if one is trying to spiritualize them as Ricoeur does. The work on oneself that is required, with the renunciation and abnegation that it can entail, is the effort to keep the word that I have given, in spite of events, changes of character, or changes of mood. The object of concern in the promise does not only involve self-constancy. I give my word to the other; it is toward the other that I am engaged, and it is the other who ulti-

mately can attest to whether I have kept my promise or not. In this way, the care of the other is directly aligned with the care of the self. This form of spirituality is called fidelity:

> Keeping one's word expresses a self-constancy which cannot be inscribed, as character was, within the dimension of something in general but solely within the dimension of "who?" Here, too, common usage is a good guide. The perseverance of character is one thing, the perseverance of faithfulness to a word that has been given is something else again. The continuity of character is one thing, the constancy of friendship is quite another . . . keeping one's promise . . . does indeed appear to stand as a challenge to time, a denial of change: even if my desire were to change, even if I were to change my opinion or my inclination, "I will hold firm."[32]

Whereas the first four studies of *Oneself as Another* seek to gather new knowledge about the self and also to construct a care of the self out of the analytic enterprise, the studies that follow give rise to an autonomous search for a new ethics of the self. Starting with the seventh study, *epimeleia heautou* becomes somewhat autonomous in Ricoeur's discourse, even while the findings of the earlier studies still remain in the background. What type of care of the self is it about, then? It is no longer a question of persevering in one's own being, of maintaining oneself in time, of developing one's ownmost powers, or of becoming human and adult. Instead, it is about "aiming for the good life with and for others in just institutions." The notion of the "aim" is what connects this retrieval of an Aristotelian ethics with the problem of the care of the self. To speak of an "aim" is to project a being that does not yet exist. It is to speak of a transformation of a being that is seeking self-esteem, solicitude, and just institutions. The conceptual deployment of the care of the self, the care of the other, and the care of society and the State was only formulated in a fragmented way in the earlier studies, but it is accomplished fully in a philosophical context that is devoted to a dialectic of (Aristotelian) ethics and (Kantian) morality. Through this recovery of Aristotelian ethics and Kantian morality (and one

should also add Levinasian ethics), Ricoeur's hermeneutic anthropology is able to incorporate the care of the self with the care of the other and institutions.

Ricoeur's retrieval of the *Nicomachean Ethics* ultimately reconnects with the Socratic spirituality that can be found in Plato's "Alcibiades": the care of the self (self-esteem) finds its complete fulfillment in care for the other (solicitude) and for just institutions. Ricoeurian care of the self, which is irreducible to the unique face of the other, extends to the horizon of all injustice:

> If self-esteem does indeed draw its initial meaning from the reflexive movement through which the evaluation of certain actions judged to be good are carried back to the author of these actions, this meaning remains abstract as long as it lacks the dialogic structure which is introduced by the reference to others. This dialogic structure, in its turn, remains incomplete outside of the reference to just institutions. In this sense, self-esteem assumes its complete sense only at the end of the itinerary of meaning traced out by the three components of the ethical aim.[33]

This point conjures away the Levinasian risk of absolutizing of the other, where care for institutions falls into the background. This is why it is difficult for Levinasian care for the other to lead to a clear politics, in spite of the care *in extremis* for the third who is incarnated in the anonymous figure of institutions. This is also why Ricoeur makes a very Arendtian plea in favor of extending the care of the self to all institutions: the third is then an included third.

The second bias of Levinasian ethics occurs in the form of an abandonment of the care of the self to the benefit of care for the other. Ricoeur is not ready to follow the Levinasian path and to sacrifice care of the self to the benefit of an infinite concern for the vulnerability of the other. To speak about incorporating the other in the course of caring for the self is not to renounce the care of the self. On the one hand, Ricoeur's hermeneutics maintains an uninterrupted connection to *gnothi seauton*, knowledge, and objectification; this is evident in his initial dialogue with analytic philosophy.

On the other hand, the operation of a pure and simple sacrifice of care of the self in the Levinasian project deeply troubles Ricoeur. Beyond the fact that this operation does not allow for a distinction, among other things, between the figure of the vulnerable and that of the hangman, it undoes the possibility of guaranteeing the demand of a responsibility toward the other. In order for there to be care for the other, must one not retain the ability to welcome a being who is able to receive a moral injunction, a being who is able to persevere in its own being in order to keep its promises, a being who is able to take care of itself in order to care for others? As much as Ricoeur reproaches Heidegger for missing the stage of care for the other in the whole course of the care of the self, he reproaches Levinas for giving up the moment of care of the self. In both cases, *epimeleia heautou* is deprived of something essential.

At the end of this Foucaultian-inspired reading of Ricoeur's hermeneutic anthropology, two conclusions can be drawn corresponding to the two Ricoeurian moments of the care of the self. The construction of the first moment (1960–1970) is situated in the context of a Heideggerian "recovery" (one which is likewise Nietzschean, Freudian, and Marxist) of the care of the self against the Cartesian rupture. The maxim par excellence of the care of the self is the aim "to become human and adult." The originality of this Ricoeurian moment, in relation to the Heideggerian "recovery," has to do with the inclusion of self-knowledge in the entire process of the care of the self. By seeking to go beyond the Cartesian rupture and the Heideggerian recovery and by trying to build new connections between *epimeleia heautou* and *gnothi seaton*, the Ricoeurian moment forges unique connections with Socratic spirituality. This is why he remains in constant dialogue with disciplines that provide knowledge of the self, even when they themselves aspire to be freed from the care of the self.

The second Ricoeurian moment (1980–2000) can be condensed in the culminating point of his philosophical anthropology: *Oneself as Another*. This second moment does not at all deny the desire to build bridges between self-knowledge and care of the self; his debate with analytic philosophy is the best example of this. The deci-

sive shift, in my opinion, can be located more on the side of extending the horizon of the care of the self. The transformation of the self no longer only concerns "becoming human and adult" but the "search for the good life with and for others in just institutions."

NOTES

1. "Philosophy and Truth," (conversation with M. Foucault, G. Canguilhem, D. Dreyfus, J. Hyppolite, P. Ricoeur), March 27, 1965. Reprinted in *Dits et écrits* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1:476–92.

2. On this aborted dialogue, see the article by Rose Goetz, "Paul Ricoeur et Michel Foucault," *Le Portique* 13–14 (2004). http://leportique.revues.org/index639.html. This article is one of the first introductions (in French) to the dialogue between Ricoeur and Foucault.

3. To this, it can be added that the two philosophers were in competition in their respective candidacies at the Collège de France in 1969, one in the name of a philosophy of action and the other in the name of a history of systems of thought. Following the selection of Foucault, Ricoeur, who was upset by it, went to the United States to teach in Chicago (see François Dosse, *Paul Ricoeur: Les sens d'une vie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), 517–19).

4. In the course of an interview initially published in 1983, Foucault affirms that he was never a Freudian, a structuralist, or a Marxist. Republished in *Dits et écrits* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013), 2:1254.

5. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 3*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 218.

6. Ibid., 219.

7. Ibid., 219.

8. Paul Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction: Conversations with François Azouvi and Marc de Launay*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 79.

9. Annie Barthélémy, "Herméneutiques croisées: Conversation imaginaire entre Ricoeur et Foucault," *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 55–67.

10. Simon Castonguay, "Ricoeur et Foucault: Vers un dialogue possible," *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 68–86.

11. Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Macmillan, 2005).

12. Ibid., 17.

13. But, the concept of *the self* is central to Ricoeur's philosophy of the subject, especially for the problem of the hermeneutics of the self. As will be shown, the hermeneutics of the self is akin to the notion of care of the self.

14. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 2.

15. Foucault speaks about a "concern for the care of the self" in the sense of paying attention, a demand, and a preoccupation with the problem of the care of the self.

16. Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 43.

17. Could one, as Foucault suggests, think about the Cartesian enterprise from the sole perspective of the withdrawal of the care of the self? Does Descartes truly break ties with all forms of spirituality? Does the Cartesian subject truly remain the same from one end to the other of his search for the truth? Cannot methodical doubt and the very exercise of metaphysical meditation be considered as technologies of the self? In other words, must not Cartesian being become other than itself in order to become a subject and grasp the first truths? Is not the care of the self introduced on yet another level, when Descartes, in the *Discourse on Method*, seeks to construct a technico-scientific knowledge with the aim of mastering nature and improving the well-being of humanity?

18. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 15.

19. See also the influence of Kohut's "self psychology" on Ricoeur's hermeneutics of the self in Michel Dupuis, "L'empathie comme outil herméneutique du soi," *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 9–20.

20. Is the first expression of Husserlian phenomenology totally foreign to the care of the self? Is not a certain transformation of the subject required for the establishment of ultimate foundations in phenomenology? Can one not take the break from the natural attitude, the conversion of the gaze that it implies, the performance of the reduction or of putting out of play, as technologies of the self that are necessary for the phenomenological attitude?

21. Paul Ricoeur, "Existence and Hermeneutics" in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 22.

22. Heidegger does not renounce the fundamental connection between care of the self and of the truth (of being). But the access to the truth is deliberately separated from any "positive" knowledge, which would reduce being to a being and thus contribute to its concealment. It is a question of rediscovering another Greek meaning of the search for truth understood as *aletheia*, as disclosure and unconcealment.

23. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 14.

24. On this point, see the valuable analysis by Jean Grondin in *Le tournant herméneutique de la phénoménologie* (Paris: PUR, 2003), 93–101.

25. Ricoeur, "Existence and Hermeneutics," in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 11.

26. See especially Ricoeur's "The Socius and the Neighbor," in *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbey (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1965).

27. This discussion already began in the 1970s in Paul Ricoeur, *La sémantique de l'action* (Paris: CNRS, 1977).

28. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 27ff.

29. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 96ff.

30. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 41ff.

31. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975).

32. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 123–24.

33. Ibid., 172.

5

THE IMAGINATION AND INSTITUTIONS

Whereas Foucault remains an important interlocutor at certain pivotal moments in Ricoeur's work, Cornelius Castoriadis is largely absent from Ricoeur's published texts. This absence does not signify *a priori* either indifference or a rejection. The same observation can be made from the side of Castoriadis, although he did display enthusiasm for Ricoeur's work, especially with the publication of *Time and Narrative*.[1] This lack of dialogue between the two thinkers is surprising in some respects.[2] Though their work does not overlap, they are joined by shared philosophical concerns and the same intellectual traditions (psychoanalysis, Marxism, phenomenology, and structuralism). Ricoeur and Castoriadis, though for different reasons, occupied a place of relative marginality in the French intellectual world throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s and their shared adherence to the movement of the "anti-totalitarian left," however heterogeneous it may be.

To compare two thinkers who did not themselves take the initiative of such a philosophical dialogue is a tall order.[3] Each work has its own world, with its own concepts, problems, connections, and horizons of meaning. To seek to bring out connections or contrasts between the concepts or issues of two heterogeneous textual worlds can turn out to be a vain and artificial attempt. To this, one can add

the fact that Castoriadis, unlike Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, or Bourdieu, is rarely characterized as a post-structuralist. He is certainly the least classifiable of all these thinkers, since he was not only a philosopher but also a psychoanalyst, economist, and sociologist. He took a revolutionary stance but rejected Marxism. He defended a theory of the subject, though it was quite different from the Cartesian or Kantian tradition, not to mention the Sartrean conception of subjectivity. If one can venture to label him a post-structuralist, this is only in the sense that Castoriadis passed through the structuralist movements, notably Lacanian psychoanalysis, but did not really seek to surpass them but retain their salient features. Structuralism is not the object of an *Aufhebung* in his thought. Between post-structuralism and anti-structuralism, Castoriadis's position adopts a strategy of "surpassing without conserving" structuralism. This is due to the decisive role granted to the notion of *social-historical creation*. We will engage Ricoeur and Castoriadis around the core of this problematic—that is, around the interconnection between the historical, the imaginary, and the political—where their interrelations intersect with structuralism and Marxism.

THE REHABILITATION OF THE SOCIAL IMAGINARY

Ricoeur and Castoriadis share a desire to restore the nobility of the imaginary and the imagination, which have mostly been discredited in the philosophical tradition since Plato. The imagination, as "a mad house," is usually associated with a lower, inadequate type of knowledge that is unable to grasp the essence of reality. There are, however, a few notable exceptions to this, such as the theory of *phantasma* in Aristotle or the role of the transcendental imagination in Kant. These become the topic of the studies by Ricoeur[4] and Castoriadis.

Among the most noteworthy examples, the positive role of the imagination is introduced in the context of a philosophy of knowledge and perception as well as in the context of a philosophy of artistic creation and aesthetics. Sartre introduces a true rupture by

taking the imagination outside of its limits and enrolling it in the context of a philosophy of freedom. Through its ability to negate what it is, the imagination opens up new self-determinations for the subject. Yet, it is less the Sartrean conception of the imagination as a power to break away from reality through the freedom of consciousness that draws Ricoeur's attention, than the phenomenological resources of "imaginative variations" in the Husserlian tradition. Imaginative variations allow for the suspension of our immediate relation to reality in order to think it, describe it, and configure it otherwise. When we intend an object, constitute it as a whole, and grasp its *eidos*, we are projecting horizons of meaning that go beyond our simple sense perception. It is precisely through "imaginative variations" that we are able to constitute the *eidos* of the object beyond what appears simply as a sense datum. Ricoeur's most valuable contribution, as we shall see, consists of transferring the role of these imaginative variations from a phenomenology of perception to a philosophy of social and political action. This rehabilitation of the imagination, for both Ricoeur and Castoriadis, presupposes a break from the conception of the imagination as an "image of something" or as a "mental image." As Michaël Foessel rightly emphasizes, it is in the context of a philosophy of meaning and language "apart from any theory of the image as a weakened perception" that Ricoeur (and one could also add Castoriadis) considers it necessary to redefine the positive role of the imagination and the imaginary:

> The imagination is what enables meaning to become comprehensible, the world expressible, and action doable. These are the three powers of the imaginary which are masterfully exposed by Ricoeur's philosophy.[5]

This displacement of the role of the imaginary clashes with the genuine anathema that Marx and Marxists have toward the social and political imaginary, which they regard as a deforming layer of superstructures and ideologies. In Marx's early writings, ideological expressions do not stand in contrast with science but with reality as praxis. First, there is actual reality, which includes work, the trans-

formation of nature, and the satisfaction of needs; then, there is what individuals imagine, which they do in a nebulous way. Over the course of his lengthy debate with Marx's writings in his *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*,[6] Ricoeur attempts to show that the first fundamental error of Marxian anthropology is to think that one can arrive at a sort of "unvarnished reality," removed of any symbolic or imaginary mediation. This would be to forget that the imaginary is constitutive of every social reality. This fundamental ontological presupposition is owed to Clifford Geertz's cultural anthropology (which can be found in another way in Cassirer or Bourdieu), according to which we cannot perceive anything without at the same time projecting a set of imaginary forms through which we are able to see and act: "Action is immediately ruled by cultural patterns which provide templates or blueprints for the organization of social and psychological processes."[7] In this sense, ideology could not be considered a "superstructure." Marx's second error, according to Ricoeur, consists of envisioning all social imaginary expressions as distortions, deformations, or dissimulations. Instead, it is necessary to recognize a positive dimension of ideology, inasmuch as imaginary functions help to provide the members of social groups with a coherence and a set of identifications that are collectively shared. This is what Ricoeur calls the integrative role of ideology, considered both in its diachronic and its synchronic dimension. This is the case, for example, with the memory of founding events, their narration, and their ritualization through commemorations and celebrations.

This belief about the role of the imagination can be linked to Castoriadis's philosophical journey, following his break with Trotskyism and Marxism. One of the numerous reasons that pushed him to break with Marx was precisely this theory of ideology and its assimilation of the imagination to superstructures. The very meaning of the distinction between infrastructures and superstructures lacks any empirical-historical validity for Castoriadis. The considerable importance granted by Marx to productive forces and technological innovations is the projection onto all forms of society of a phenomenon that had a specific relevance at the time of nineteenth-

century industrial capitalism. But societies have experienced political and cultural upheavals, even though their material productive forces have not undergone any significant technological change at all. In his article "Marxism: A Provisional Assessment," Castoriadis emphasizes this point:

> No technical fact has an assignable meaning if it is isolated from the society in which it is produced and none imposes a univocal and ineluctable sense to the human activities that it underlies, even these. At a distance of only a few kilometers, in the same jungle, with the same weapons and instruments, two primitive tribes develop social structures and cultures as dissimilar as possible.[8]

The opposition between superstructures and infrastructures does not hold up on a socio-anthropological level, because it renders one unable to think about institutions and particularly what Castoriadis calls "social imaginary meanings." Marxist theory presupposes the existence of something that is constituted prior to institutions and expressed independently from them. Castoriadis thus shares the Ricoeurian critique of the claim to reach an "unvarnished reality," wiped free of the veneer of social imaginary meanings. Symbolic institution occurs even on the level of relations of production that are conceivable without it. Master-slave relations and bourgeois-proletariat relations are derived from social imaginary meanings; they are not merely secondary expressions. Marx's mistake, ultimately, is to grant a sort of ontological primacy to work over language.

What Ricoeur calls ideology-integration is very close to the concept of social imaginary meanings. It is through this set of meanings that societies can form a whole with some coherence and that there can be a social unity in spite of all the crises, tensions, and divisions that take place within society. Scientifically, it is indeed quite difficult to understand this social unity as a whole, without falling into the trap of organic metaphors that would turn society into some sort of greater spirit. The integrative function of social imaginary ex-

pressions means that everyone is recognized as a "member," even beyond the idiosyncrasies of the individual members of a society. These meanings do not fall from the sky, but they are not the product of individual imaginations on their own, either. Instead, for Castoriadis, it can be said that each individual is like a total part of society. This is also the reason why Ricoeur prefers the more holistic notion of the "member" to the atomistic notion of the individual.[9] Just as biology after Cuvier is able to reconstruct the entire body and to date its stage of evolution based on the discovery of a single piece of the body (a tooth, a jaw bone, etc.), likewise one should be able to reconstruct the social imaginary meanings of the society to which an individual belongs by analyzing his or her ways of acting, speaking, and thinking.

THE LESSON OF THE "MASTERS OF SUSPICION" IN DEBATE: MARX VS. FREUD

Although both of these thinkers provide a critique of the Marxist theory of social imaginary functions, this does not imply, at least for Ricoeur, the pure and simple rejection of all of Marx's theory. If it is the case that Marx missed the positive role of ideology as integration, if the rigidity of the Marxist conceptual tools is mistrusted for its overly harsh opposition between science and ideology, for Ricoeur it still seems worthwhile to retain the role of ideology as distortion and dissimulation. In fact, Ricoeur, unlike Castoriadis, can still in a sense be called a Marxist, because this negative role of ideology is still needed in order to understand how some imaginary meanings can mask or hide class or power relations. Ricoeur never denied the teachings of the "masters of suspicion," but he did not follow their deconstruction of the subject all the way. This is why Ricoeur can rightly be described as a post-structuralist.[10] Yet, it is difficult, even impossible, for Castoriadis to retain Marx's notion of ideology as dissimulation and, at the same time, reject the opposition between infrastructure and superstructure. Marx's whole theory of the imagination is based on a foundation that is both epistemolog-

ically and ontologically erroneous. Castoriadis is not unaware, however, of the existence of deformed or mystifying social imaginary meanings, but he believes that they can be thought in a conceptual framework that is purified of all Marxist residues.[11]

Ricoeur seeks to save part of Marx's theory by situating it in a dialectic with a sociological framework inspired by Max Weber. This is what he tries to do in his *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*. Weber shows that, after a society is differentiated into the governing and the governed, the former use their power to impose order on the latter by means of force. When we are dealing with a logic that is not simply about power but domination, the implementation of this order requires the consent, even the cooperation, of the governed. To establish this consent, a system of legitimation is put into place, which can be based on charisma, tradition, or even the rationality of the law. Once we directly enter into contact with the question of power or authority, it is no longer merely a matter of social imaginary meanings but of political imaginary meanings as well.

Although Ricoeur espouses this general schema, which is quite familiar today, he regrets that Weber himself did not pursue his discovery all the way to the end. The Weberian framework provides an unexpected opportunity to understand the origin of ideology as a distortion and dissimulation of power relations. There is no equivalence between the attempt of an authority to govern and the governed's belief in the justification of this attempt. In other words, there is always more in the ruler's claim to legitimacy than in the beliefs actually held by the members of the group. This "more," this supplement of the search for belief, is not conceptualized by Weber. But it can be thought from an overtly Marxist framework, especially through a transposition of the theory of surplus value. This is what Ricoeur calls us to think:

> Surplus-value is not necessarily intrinsic to the structure of production, but it is necessary to the structure of power. In socialist systems, for example, although no private appropriation of the means of production is permitted, surplus-value still exists because of the structure of power. This structure of power poses

> the same question as all others, a question of belief. Believe in me, the political leader exhorts. The difference between the claim made and the belief offered signifies the surplus-value common to all structures of power. In its claim to legitimacy, every authority asks for more than what its members offer in terms of belief or creed.[12]

However original this ideological theory of surplus value may be, it clashes with Castoriadis's desire to break definitively with Marxism. Through a psychoanalytic schema, Castoriadis seeks to unlock the mystifying origins of social and political meanings. If we first consider the level of the individual, mystification and distortion of the imaginary take root in the unconscious, which acts "as something other than me." This mystification about oneself can be called heteronomy or alienation. By borrowing some aspects of Freud's and Lacan's analyses, Castoriadis points out:

> The essential characteristic of the discourse of the Other, from the point of view that interests us here, is its relation to the imaginary. It has to do with the fact that, ruled by this discourse, the subject takes himself or herself to be something he or she is not (or is not necessarily) and that for him or her, others, and the entire world undergo a corresponding misrepresentation. . . . What is essential to heteronomy—or to alienation in the general sense of the term—on the level of the individual, is the domination of an autonomized imaginary which has assumed the function of defining for the subject both reality and desire.[13]

Without falling into the ontological trap of positing organic entities, Castoriadis seeks to think mystification analogously on both the individual scale and the collective scale. Just as one can say, on the individual scale, that the imagination is mystified when the discourse of the Other, the unconscious, takes over the place of the subject, likewise one can say that the social imaginary is mystified when the members of a society believe that their laws and institutions are given once and for all by an Other, whether it is God, Nature, Ancestors, or the forces of History. The mystification of

social imaginary meanings stems from the fact that individuals do not recognize the institutions that have come about as their own work; they do not recognize the self-institutionalization of society. Castoriadis does not need the metaphor of the *camera obscura* or the epistemological polarity between infrastructures and superstructures in order to analyze the pathology of social imaginary meanings.

THE FORCE OF INHERITANCE AND SOCIO-HISTORICAL CREATION

As a disciple of the "masters of suspicion," Ricoeur would doubt the possibility of an individual or of society to be fully autonomous and self-transparent, after it has repressed the heteronomy of the discourse of the unconscious as well as the transcendent origins of society. From his long passage through Freudian psychoanalysis in the 1960s, Ricoeur learned that this process is endless, if the "I will be, where the id was." It is impossible to suppress the existence of the unconscious, the infantile and the instincts within us. That is to say that lucidity about oneself and the autonomy of the subject are "promised lands," which are always projected as reflexive recoveries. This is how his project of reestablishing a reflexive philosophy through a reading of Freud can be understood.

However, Castoriadis never understood individual or collective autonomy as an achieved state (this is why he prefers to translate Freud's famous adage "*Wo es war, muss ich warden*" as "there where it was, I must come to be"). The struggle against heteronomy is a permanent struggle. Here it should be recognized that there is actually a strong convergence between the Ricoeurian and Castoriadian readings of Freud. To become autonomous, for Castoriadis, means on the individual level not the suppression of the unconscious (which would be completely illusory) but another relation between consciousness and the unconscious. It passes through a true recognition that there is a discourse of the Other in each subject and a true recognition of the subject's drives, anxieties, and fantasies

(one which recognizes them reflexively and does not merely repeat them).

The main disagreement between the two philosophers concerns which scale is privileged. On the level of the individual psyche, Castoriadis considers it impossible to eradicate the discourse of the Other (to which Ricoeur would agree), but on the socio-historical level, he does think it is possible to eradicate heteronomy, for instance, in certain privileged historical experiences when societies recognized themselves as the product of their own work. Ricoeur does not share the same optimism on the socio-historical level. On the one hand, he can only be suspicious of the past existence of fully autonomous societies: there still persist extra-social sources and what he calls the "residual violence" of political institutions, even in democratic societies.[14] On the other hand, new social and political imaginary meanings are always inherited from prior imaginary forms. This Arendtian objection by Ricoeur grants primacy to the tradition of authority (and not to the "authority of tradition"), where each new foundation is inscribed in a long narrative chain. Ricoeur addresses this objection against Lefort's theory of democracy, but it can also be applied to the thesis defended by Castoriadis (in spite of the deep disagreements between the two founders of *Socialisme ou Barbarie*):

> It is on this doctrinal point that I part ways with Claude Lefort, who, faced with this enigma of the origin of power, insists on the absence of any foundation proper to democracy; for him, democracy is the first regime that is founded on nothing, only on itself, that is, on a void. Whence its extreme fragility. I try to say, for my part, that it is always founded on the anteriority of itself to itself. Can this be called a foundation? If so, it would be in the sense in which one speaks of founding events.[15]

This objection can also be interpreted, not in the rigorously structuralist sense (where there are only gaps in relation to a given system), but in the post-structuralist and hermeneutic sense: the weight of "structured structures" (Bourdieu), the force of the "long

duration" (Braudel), the impossibility of a radical escape from traditions (Gadamer), the aporia of a full and complete mastery of meaning harming the ability for institutional creation.

Conversely, it is against these structuralist and hermeneutic presuppositions that Castoriadis tries to think socio-historic creation or what he calls the (radical) socially instituting imaginary in contrast with the socially instituted imaginary. The radical social imaginary allows us to show what is to come, in the course of the history of forms, through entirely new meanings that cannot be deduced from their antecedent conditions. This is the case, for example, with the rise of the Greek *polis* or the events of the Paris Commune. These are authentic historical creations that cannot be understood in terms of a deterministic principle of causality. The imagination at work here is not reproductive, in the sense of the representation in its absence of something that already exists; instead, it is productive and creative. It is the invention of meanings that have never existed and that are not preformed or predetermined in something that already exists. This process derives from a noncausal and non-structuralist logic, which

> appears as behavior that is not merely "unpredictable" but creative (on the level of individuals, groups, classes or entire societies). It appears not as a simple deviation in relation to an existing type but as the positing of a new type of behavior, as the institution of a new social rule, as the invention of a new object or a new form—in short, as an emergence or production which cannot be deduced on the basis of a previous situation, as a conclusion that goes beyond the premises or as the positing of new premises.[16]

The notion of socio-historical creation is met with caution from a Ricoeurian point of view. To be sure, Ricoeur could easily agree with a defense of innovation, the event, and initiative (in the Arendtian sense of "beginning something new in the world"). This is the very purpose of his debate with the structuralists: to breathe history, uncertainty, and change into "structures" that are conceived only in

terms of their differential gaps. Yet, the radicality of Castoriadis's position is incompatible with the principles of Ricoeur's political and historical epistemology. The idea of historical creation, inasmuch as it goes beyond an inquiry into antecedent conditions, renders the very idea of a historical science impossible. If socio-historical meanings do no result from causes, then what do they come from? Everything happens as if historical reality, to speak in Kantian terms, escaped from the reign of causality and the phenomenal realm and instead belonged to a sort of noumenal reality. In the first volume of *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur spends a long time on the status of causality in history, by taking great care to distinguish clearly between causal explanation and law-governed explanation. It seems suspect, as with Castoriadis, to explain historical processes by relying on a nomological knowledge in the sense that the same causes, in similar circumstances, would produce the same effects. But it seems equally impossible to do without the idea of causes, except by mystifying historical processes altogether. The operation of singular social imputation, borrowed from Weber, consists in constructing unreal pasts in order to determine, among a set of causes, the ones that seem the most adequate for explaining the appearance of a new phenomenon.[17]

Notwithstanding the ambiguity of the notion of creation, Castoriadis never stated that socio-historical processes occurred as if they were a miracle coming from nothing. There are some historical experiences that are less possible than others at a given period. But it is impossible to explain socio-historical creation, the invention of a new object and a new form, if one systematically reduces them to prior conditions or if one considers them as a simple gap in relation to an already existing type. Socio-historical heteronomy derives precisely from the fact that individuals do not recognize the permanent self-institution of society but leave them up to causes, forces, and laws that transcend this continual self-creation. In this sense, echoing the commentary of Nicolas Poirier, one should speak of an "unmotivated creation," "a first position of meanings on the basis of which societies alone can create their world and organize it as a unique socio-historical reality."[18]

UTOPIA: A MYSTIFYING OR EMANCIPATORY CONCEPT?

A final point of disagreement between the two thinkers concerns the status of utopia as a social and political imaginary in contrast with ideology. While the three ideological functions identified by Ricoeur (ideology-integration, ideology-legitimation, ideology-dissimulation) seek to maintain the existing order and dominant classes, the utopian role of the imaginary aspires fundamentally to subvert the instituted imaginary. From utopia, Ricoeur retains the idea of the "no-where," not as an "empty space" but as a "laboratory" for "imaginative variations" of what does not exist. Its aim is both to put what exists at a reflexive distance and to propose new horizons of expectation. Ricoeur has utopia play the same role, on the level of political experience, that Husserl assigned to imaginative variations on the level of phenomenological experience: utopia performs a suspension of reality and opens a space of possibilities. The imagining of a society that is situated nowhere allows for a radical challenge of what exists, from family relations to relations of political power. And it is through the subversive role of utopia that we can state that such ideologies are mystifying:

> The order which has been taken for granted suddenly appears queer and contingent. There is an experience of the contingency of order. This, I think, is the main value of utopias. At a time when everything is blocked by systems which have failed but which cannot be beaten—this is my pessimistic appreciation of our time—utopia is our resource. It may be an escape, but it is also the arm of critique.[19]

It is not so much up to science, in the Marxist sense of the term, to say what counts as a mystifying imaginary as it is up to utopias. It is from the point of view of a utopia that a critical eye can be cast on ideologies. Such utopias do not necessarily seek to be realized but serve as a regulative and critical horizon for existing practices. Ricoeur encounters this project in the Habermasian ideal of an ideal

discourse community without any limits or constraints. While there is a positive role of utopia, utopia can also have a pathological role consisting of the flight outside of reality. Here the non-pathological functions of ideology can help to provide the utopian imaginary with a space of experience and rootedness, which Ricoeur finds in Reinhart Koselleck's dialectic between a "space of experience" and a "horizon of expectation." From one side, the appeal to utopias allows for a return to the possible, a distance from an existing order that is on the road to solidifying. From the other side, the space of experience allows for the selection of new possibilities, some of which can turn out to be impertinent to certain given historical configurations. There we find the two poles in which the architecture of Ricoeur's anthropology is tied together:

> Consciousness is "situated" in a symbolic universe that precedes it, but it is at the same time a consciousness of "nowhere," which is able to test its freedom within the imagination.[20]

Unlike Ricoeur, Castoriadis has a deep distrust of the notion of utopia as a project that does not have a place. He equally mistrusts the orientation of this notion as a "regulative idea" in the Kantian sense that can be found today in Habermas. These regulative ideas are like the "polar stars" that help to orient us within reality. They help us to think it otherwise, although we are never able to reach them:

> The term utopia has recently become fashionable again, to some extent under the influence of Ernst Bloch, a Marxist who had more or less adjusted to the East German regime, and who never criticized Stalinism and the totalitarian bureaucratic regimes. . . . Habermas took the term up again more recently, because after the total ruin of Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, it seems to legitimate some vague criticism of the current regime by talking about a utopian socialist transformation, with a whiff of "pre-Marxism." Actually, it's quite the opposite. No-one (except a neo-Kantian philosopher) can understand how it is possible to

> criticize what is on the basis of what cannot be. The term utopia is a mystification.[21]

This critique of Habermas could be applied to Ricoeur as well in virtue of their shared understanding of the notion of utopia, with the slight reservation that for Ricoeur its sense is not only neo-Kantian but also Husserlian through his "politicization" of "imaginative variations." Whereas Ricoeur and Habermas consider utopia to be a powerful critical tool of distanciation and emancipation, Castoriadis sees it as only a project of mystification (in another modality, Castoriadis paradoxically repeats the Marxist trial of utopia in order to contrast it less with a "scientific socialism" than a "real socialism"). The heart of Castoriadis's objection resides in the fact that the project of autonomy, as he envisions it, is not a "polar star"; instead, it is a socio-historical project that has already been realized in privileged historical experiences and that ought to be renewed *hic et nunc*. Castoriadis is very clear about the fact that some periods are less advantageous than others for the occurrence of such a project. For example, our own era, marked by what Castoriadis calls "the eclipse of the project of autonomy," is ruled by "the growing weight, in contemporary societies, of privatization, depoliticization and individualism."[22]

It is in this sense that Castoriadis presents himself as a revolutionary and not as a utopian. These historical experiences of autonomy have existed, according to him, at least twice in Western civilization: in ancient Greece and in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages. These real experiences are had by a society that conceives of itself as self-established, that continually calls into question its laws and institutions, and that breaks with the "closure of meaning" in heteronomous societies. To speak of autonomy does not only imply self-reflexivity and greater clarity of a society about itself, an endless questioning of the meaning of justice, its norms and its foundation. It also means that individuals are actually sovereign, that they themselves establish the laws through which they wish to live together, that they actually directly participate in the decision-making process, as much on the political level as on the socioeconomic

level. In this sense, autonomy for Castoriadis is conveyed by the self-government of citizens and the self-management of workers.[23] In this case, it is not a utopia in the Ricoeurian sense but the projects that have been realized in Ancient Greece, the Paris Commune, the Soviets in Russia, or the workers' councils in Hungary. These experiences are of new radical imaginaries oriented toward radical autonomy, which presuppose the suppression of bureaucratic capitalism, that is to say, the suppression of capitalism and the State.

Ironically, this project of radical autonomy could be related to the "pathological" role that Ricoeur grants to utopia—that is, a radical project of social and political change that does not have any basis within the space of experience. Informed by Hegel's teachings on terror in the French Revolution and Arendt's lessons about totalitarian systems, Ricoeur mistrusts a politics of the *tabula rasa*, with a rupture in the chain of the tradition of authority and the dream of an abstract and empty freedom, conceived without the mediation of existing institutions. Instead, social and political transformations have a greater chance of success and legitimacy if they can "be authorized" by prior foundations of power (in the Arendtian sense).

This objection could, however, be undermined when the project of radical autonomy (which has strong connections with the Arendtian sense of power) is based completely on the experiences of democracy or self-government mentioned above. But for Castoriadis, unlike Arendt, it is not necessary for these new historical creations to derive a supplement to the soul or legitimacy from a "tradition of authority," especially if one refers back to the Roman Republic to find the original foundation. If there were a master to be rediscovered, or rather a founding experience of autonomy, it would be the experience of the Greeks. When the Greeks invent self-government and refuse to go back to a transcendent source as the basis of their decision, they do not need to justify themselves with a prior foundation. Quite the contrary, they build a model of government, a socio-historical creation that calls into question every prior political foundation. The Communards of Paris, the sailors and workers of Kronstadt, do not need to have recourse to a "Roman

foundation" in order to establish a radical imaginary with workers' self-government.

Besides, if revolutions do turn out poorly, for Castoriadis this is not the fault of the revolutionary process itself, nor is it the fault of experiences of self-government, however ephemeral they may be. The fault is the seizing of power by a caste, a class, a bureaucracy that perverts its initial momentum. It is not the brutal rupture provoked by the Soviets and the manufacturing Committees in the socio-historical regime of Russia that explains the degeneration of the revolution and the installation of a bureaucratic totalitarian capitalism. Instead, it is the stranglehold by a bureaucratic and authoritarian party (the Bolshevik party) over these singular experiences of self-government, the class domination of a State bureaucracy over the rest of society that explains why this revolution ended up as one of the worst catastrophes of the past century.

In this light, it is perhaps a Hegelian point that separates Ricoeur from Castoriadis. The two philosophers are attached to the ontological primacy of institutions over individuals inasmuch as it is up to the "city" to humanize human beings. But, Castoriadis seeks to conceive democratic institutions without the State, while Ricoeur remains attached to the existence of the State in the process of realizing human capabilities. The Hegelian ground in Ricoeur (he often speaks of his "quasi-Hegelian respect for institutions," a respect that is counterbalanced by his "sympathies" for subversive utopias, to the point of regretting up to the end of his life an event like May 1968) does not result in a sort of deification of the State:

> It is one thing to claim that institutions do not derive from individuals but always from other previously existing institutions, and it is another thing to confer upon them a spirituality distinct from that of individuals. What, finally, is inadmissible in Hegel is the thesis of the objective mind and its corollary, the thesis of the state erected as a superior agency endowed with self-knowledge.[24]

Ricoeur's legitimate attempt, along with Husserl and Weber, to desubstantialize the State does not seek to abandon the idea of the State entirely. Instead, he seeks to found it otherwise—that is, in terms of "a co-action."[25] But it is along with the "young Hegel," the philosopher of Jena, that Ricoeur seeks to envision autonomy, not as something "radical" but as "mutual recognition":

> There are thus two entryways into this phenomenon: the fact that individual autonomy can only prosper in a type of society in which its value is recognized is countered by the fact that without the individual's recognition of a debt to political institutions modern individuality could never have seen the light of day.[26]

There we find all the ingredients that differentiate autonomy in Ricoeur and Castoriadis. On the one hand, autonomy in Castoriadis, even if it has a sense, especially from the psychoanalytic viewpoint of "becoming a subject," is first understood as collective autonomy, as an institutional group. On the other hand, this project of collective autonomy is resolutely incompatible with the existence of the State, even the supposedly most democratic ones. To be sure, ever since the founding article of his political philosophy—"The Political Paradox"—Ricoeur was on guard against the "evil" proper to the State, its founding and structural violence (through which it becomes necessary to limit and to foresee its mechanisms of control). Yet, he remains deeply attached to the rationality of the State as a means for the realization and perfecting of human beings. Castoriadis's mistake, from this point of view, is ultimately in failing to distinguish between the State as an effort to dominate and the State as a *res publica*—that is, as a space for sharing words and things that cannot be appropriated by any individual or particular group. How else can we understand the real opposition felt by many of our fellow citizens toward the dismantling of public services, their rejection of privatization and the commodification of the public sphere? Because his concept of autonomy is "radical" (radically without a "State"), Castoriadis cannot truly conceive the existence of a sphere of autonomy as a public thing in contemporary "demo-

cratic" States. To be sure, Castoriadis was also always disturbed by the neoliberal attempt to privatize the public sphere. But as soon as there is an apparatus of domination in the State, there is a separation between the governing and the governed. Once the State is at the service of capital, it suffices to say that the form of "the State" is incompatible with the radical project of autonomy. The so-called democratic States today (what Bernard Manin calls "representative governments") are reducible for Castoriadis to liberal oligarchies. Even if, legally, the State is defined as a public thing,

> the State is not the property of the head of State as his or her fiefdom or house. But in fact, public affairs are always the private affairs of various groups and clans that share effective power. Decisions are made behind closed doors, the little that is brought onto the public stage is masked, prefabricated, and belated to the point of irrelevance.[27]

There is certainly at least one shared conviction that makes a heuristic dialogue between Ricoeur and Castoriadis possible: the central importance granted to symbolic or imaginary mediations. This philosophical anthropology, which has family resemblances with the work of Clifford Geertz, Pierre Bourdieu, and Ernst Cassirer, to mention only a few, regards the human being as a "symbolic animal." Contrary to a psychology of images or a Marxist vulgate of infrastructures, nothing exists either on this side or beyond meaning and language. The recognition of this anthropological fact allows these two philosophers to go beyond a strict obedience to structuralist semiology that would remain within the theory of signs (without reaching the symbol) and to rehabilitate an imaginary oriented by a theory of social and political action. The shared intellectual basis that profoundly joins Ricoeur and Castoriadis is nothing other than the Freudian legacy. It matters little that Ricoeur inquires into this legacy starting from the hermeneutic tradition; the essential point is, through their similar readings of the father of psychoanalysis, they reconnect along the path of the symbolic conditions for becoming a subject.

The paths of Ricoeur and Castoriadis diverge when one passes from a theory of the subject to a theory of institutions. There are Marxist and post-structuralist residues in Ricoeur that cannot be easily accommodated by the desire of the co-founder of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* to break definitively with Marx and to escape completely from the structuralist ruts. To be more precise, there are four main stumbling blocks standing between the two philosophers. The first concerns the Marxist residue of Ricoeur's theory of ideology. The second concerns the incompatibility of the notion of socio-historical creation with the post-structuralist hermeneutics of traditions. The third bears on the Ricoeurian attempt to rehabilitate utopia as a critical tool for subverting the real, whereas Castoriadis sees it as a mystifying enterprise. Finally, the fourth has to do with the status of autonomy: while Ricoeur frames it within a Hegelian philosophy of recognition in a State, the existence of any State institutions is altogether incompatible with the radical project proposed by Castoriadis.

NOTES

1. Castoriadis writes: "My obvious and central differences with Paul Ricoeur do not, of course, stand in the way of my admiration for the richness and solidity of his critical analysis of the main inherited philosophical conceptions regarding time" (*The World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis, and the Imagination*, trans. David Ames Curtis [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997], 438). The two philosophers knew each other for a long time. In 1968, Castoriadis wrote a thesis that was directed by Ricoeur at the very same time as Ricoeur was working on the social and political imaginary. Ricoeur later wrote a letter of recommendation for Castoriadis when he was a candidate at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS, 1980).

2. Likewise, one might be surprised by the lack of published works seeking to create a systematic dialogue between their respective philosophies. As one rare exception, there is a contribution by William Wahl, "Pathologies of Desire and Duty: Freud, Ricoeur and Castoriadis on Trans-

forming Religious Culture," *Journal of Religion and Health* 47, no. 3 (2008): 398–414.

3. Yet, note the short dialogue on a show of France Culture, the "Bon plaisir," which was dedicated to Paul Ricoeur (on March 9, 1985). Olivier Mongin and Jean-Marc Ferry also participated in this discussion.

4. The best introduction in French to the central role of the imagination in Ricoeur's anthropology is the one presented by Michaël Foessel, "Paul Ricoeur ou les puissances de l'imaginaire," in *Paul Ricoeur: Anthologie*, ed. M. Foessel and F. Lamouche (Paris: Seuil, 2007), 7–22. This essay sets out to reveal the unity of Ricoeur's work by reconstructing how the imaginary and imagination are employed through the major stages of his philosophy.

5. Ibid., 10.

6. See Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

7. Ibid., 12.

8. Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 23.

9. See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 1*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 198–200.

10. We rejoin here the thesis of Andy Lock and Tom Strong who assimilate Ricoeur's philosophy with post-structuralism due to the importance of the paradigm of the "masters of suspicion" in his work (*Social Constructionism: Sources and Stirrings in Theory and Practice* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 74–77).

11. Castoriadis's break from Marxism does not signify for him the rejection of the whole Marxian corpus (notably the theory of the Paris Commune or some of its economic analyses of the development of Western capitalism).

12. Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 14.

13. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 102–3.

14. See Paul Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction: Conversations with François Azouvi and Marc de Launay*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 100–102.

15. Ibid., 102. This is a false debate in some sense, since Claude Lefort and Ricoeur are not really talking about the same thing. By talking about "empty space," Lefort seeks to think the foundation of liberal democracy;

by talking about a "prior foundation," Ricoeur seeks to think the origin of modern democracies.

16. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 44.

17. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 1*, 187–90.

18. Nicolas Poirier, *Castoriadis: L'imaginaire radical* (Paris: PUF, 2004), 85–86.

19. Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 300.

20. M. Foessel, "Ricoeur et les puissances de l'imaginaire," 22. On this theme, see also Marianne Moyaert, "Between Ideology and Utopia: Honneth and Ricoeur on Symbolic Violence, Marginalization, and Recognition," *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 70–83; Gonçalo Marcelo, "Paul Ricoeur and the Utopia of Mutual Recognition," *Études Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 110–33.

21. Cornelius Castoriadis, "The Project of Autonomy Is Not a Utopia," in *A Society Adrift: Interviews and Debates, 1974–1997*, trans. Helen Arnold (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 3.

22. Cornelius Castoriadis, *The World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis, and the Imagination*, trans. David Ames Curtis (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 39.

23. First restricted to the sense of "collective management (self-management)," the concept of autonomy received a more "radical" meaning in the sense of the "*ongoing, explicit self-institution of society*, meaning a state in which the collectivity knows that its institutions are its own creation and has become able to regard them as such, to reexamine them and transform them. If you accept that idea, it defines a unified revolutionary project" (Castoriadis*, A Society Adrift: Interviews and Debates, 1974–1997*, 41). According to Philippe Caumières's analyses, the concept of autonomy receives different characterizations over the course of Castoriadis's intellectual journey. It is affiliated with the concept of workers' management in the 1950s, assimilated with self-management in the 1970s, and then identified with democracy in the 1980s. But the same project is always in effect: "how can one concretely put in place a truly autonomous society, that is to say, one that is fully responsible for itself and the directions that it takes?" See Caumières, *Castoriadis: Le projet d'autonomie*. (Paris: Michalon, 2007), 8.

24. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 255–56.

25. Ricoeur, "Hegel and Husserl on Intersubjectivity," in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 242.

26. Paul Ricoeur, "Langage, politique, rhétorique," in *Lectures I: Autour du politique* (Paris: Seuil, 1991), 165.

27. Cornelius Castoriadis, "Done and to Be Done," in *The Castoriadis Reader*, ed. David Ames Curtis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 407. Translation modified.

CONCLUSION

Our initial question was to ask whether it was necessary to contrast Ricoeur's philosophy with post-structuralism or whether his philosophy could be shown to be a unique variety of post-structuralism instead. At the end of our study, the latter hypothesis can be confirmed. To be sure, from the outset, we cautioned against any attempt to reify post-structuralism. It is not a school of thought in which one can find a constellation of thinkers but a retrospective reconstruction drawn from the history of ideas or the history of philosophy. To provide a heuristic sense to this reconstruction, the smallest common philosophical denominator is the project of integrating the prerequisites of structuralism with an attempt to go beyond structuralism. To the extent that each thinker has negotiated this passage, as well as the horizons of this surpassing, in a particular way, we have advocated in favor of speaking about post-structuralisms in the plural and in favor of a set of dyadic confrontations between Ricoeur and the philosophers who are typically classified within this movement—though Castoriadis, as we have shown, remains separate from them.

It is rather rare in Francophone scholarship to see Ricoeur associated with the post-structuralists. The expression itself is no longer commonly used in France, but it is still used in Anglo-American scholarship. Numerous studies have supported the pertinence of

considering entire sections of Ricoeur's philosophy as a variety of post-structuralism, even though his work is irreducible to anything that can be found in the other thinkers designated by this label. Several reasons can help us to argue in favor of this connection.

First, instead of rejecting the contributions of structural analyses of language, texts, and action, Ricoeur retains its salient elements in order to break with a psychology of understanding, to ensure the autonomy of the text and action, and to turn the structural schema into the epistemological paradigm for explanation in the human and social sciences. While fully adopting this heritage, Ricoeur develops his project differently. He seeks to reestablish the process of understanding through an escape from the system of the text or action and an analysis of the tools for reconfiguration and recontextualization. Ricoeur thus paves the way for a specific branch of post-structuralism that, by Lubomir Dolezel and Kim Atkins, has been identified as a post-structuralist hermeneutics. Although the approaches of the sociologist and the philosopher are not purely and simply identical, it seemed pertinent to connect Bourdieu's genetic or constructivist post-structuralism with the post-structuralist hermeneutics of Ricoeur. In both cases, there is an emphasis placed on the structured structures of systems of action and systems of identification, but without reifying them. When historicized and situated within the dynamics of interactions, structures are at the same time also structuring. This is all the more reason to distance Ricoeur from the radicality of the notion of socio-historical creation that was advocated by Castoriadis whose position is perhaps closer to anti-structuralism than post-structuralism. Ricoeur's hermeneutics can also be reconnected to Deleuze's post-structuralist pragmatism with its desire to rehabilitate the event against the structuralist reduction of it to a differential gap in a synchronic system. But the neo-Stoic conceptualization of the event, which Deleuze conceives as an *Aion* of the pure becoming of a non-existent, distances him from Ricoeur's Neo-Aristotelian solution in which the event is temporalized and takes on a meaning within the matrix of a plot.

Moreover, Ricoeur's hermeneutics can be called post-structuralist in a second respect, through his confrontation with the "masters

of suspicion." Andy Lock and Tom Strong encourage this path of research. Indeed, Ricoeur's relation to Nietzsche, Marx, or Freud has never been called uncritical. Yet, instead of being rejected *a priori*, the hermeneutics of suspicion is incorporated as a dialectical moment within the process of understanding, the effort to constitute the self, and the development of an ethics and a politics. More broadly, Ricoeur shares with the other post-structuralist thinkers the fundamental conviction, inherited from the philosophers of suspicion, that the "subject is not the master of meaning." This is why we spoke of a "Nietzschean mood" at work in Ricoeur's ethical writings at the time of the "conflict of interpretations." This "Nietzschean mood" has a certain affiliation with the Deleuzian insurrection against the dominance of the moral law and with the Derridean resistance to the dominance of Western *Logos*. It is in the same spirit that we have insisted on the preconditions as well as the social and psychological predeterminations of meaning that prevent the Ricoeurian subject from coinciding with itself. There is thus no contradiction between the Ricoeurian archeology of the subject and Freudian deep hermeneutics or the Bourdieusian sociology of the habitus. For Ricoeur, the strategy of suspicion is correlative with an archeology of the subject; it calls for an effort of self-recovery and of attestation that is far removed from the radicality of a Guattarian-Deleuzian schizoanalysis that calls for the production of a "body without organs" and invalidates the becoming of a subject. Yet, the reflexive hermeneutics of the self that Ricoeur hopes for does have strong resonances with the sociological *anamnesis* professed by Bourdieu, Foucault's care of the self, and with some qualifications, Castoriadis's project of autonomy conceived under the aegis of the Freudian hermeneutics of reconstruction.

From ethics, we move on to the political test of post-structuralism, but without leaving the school of suspicion behind. Ricoeur is sometimes associated with the "anti-totalitarian left," on the basis, for example, of his involvement with the journal *Esprit*. But, except for his youth in the 1930s, Ricoeur did not experience the same pre- or post-1968 "left-ization" of most of the thinkers connected with the various strands of post-structuralism. Without hiding "his sym-

pathies," as he would later write, for the student strikes of May 1968, he would guard a painful memory of his experience as the dean of the Faculty of Nanterre beginning in 1969. Belonging to an older generation than Derrida, Foucault, Bourdieu, or Deleuze, Ricoeur is rarely mentioned on American campuses as a subversive figure in French Theory. Beyond these questions concerning his reception, the strong influence of the young Marx's thought on Ricoeur's political thought, at least prior to the 1990s, is too often forgotten. To be sure, this is far removed from the Althusserian Marxism that long dominated France, but there is indeed a desire to reestablish Marxism on an anthropological basis, especially in his *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, without denying the role of suspicion as a basis for analyzing and critiquing the ideological distortions emanating from political power. This is why it is important for Ricoeur to retain one of the functions of ideology for Marx: ideological dissimulation. To be sure, Ricoeur's Marx is so complex that one cannot speak of Ricoeur as a Marxist, at the most it can be said that there are "Marxian roots" (as one can speak about a "Nietzschean mood" in his first ethics). Though these "Marxian" roots do not disappear, they tend to lose their vigor in the 1990s, when Ricoeur takes a "Rawlsian turn" and distances himself from "socialism with a human face" in order to ratify the new social-democratic reality. But Ricoeur's reflections on the variations of the social and political imaginary do not allow his thought to be reduced to the "decline of Marxism" and critical thought. Quite the contrary, Ricoeur's call to revive utopias as subversive horizons of the existing order, along with his lengthy studies of Habermas and the French utopian socialists, converge to provide a renewal of post-structuralism's critical potential—through its hermeneutic variety.

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